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The Nation.

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EDITORIAL

PIPELINE BREAKS

Sifting out the chaff of self-serving White House declarations from all the commentary on Al Haig's forced resignation (his abrasive personality, his refusal to follow orders, etc.), we are left with the policy differences—and the sneaking suspicion that he was, if not a martyr, at least a scapegoat for foreign policy incompetence in the Oval Office. Subtract Haig's views on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the Soviet natural gas pipeline to Western Europe, and you are left with the mix of ideology and confusion that is the hallmark of President Reagan's handling of foreign affairs.

The tragic effects of White House disarray on Lebanon are discussed on page 35. Consider also the Presidential ban on sales by American companies of equipment for the pipeline. Here we see the ideological side in action. The hypocrisy of billing the ban as punishment for continuing Soviet repression in Poland, in view of U.S. grain sales to Russia, was quickly denounced by the West Germans, who have the biggest economic stake in the $15 billion pipeline.

The breadth of the outrage on the Continent over the equipment ban also reflected Europe's growing rebellion against U.S. domination, of which the nuclear disarmament movement is another facet. The Administration could reflexively dismiss E.N.D. as Communist-inspired, but it will be hard-pressed to pin that label on corporate Germany.

And what of the action by three major U.S. oil companies—Exxon, Shell and Mobil—which own more than 25 percent of the stock of Ruhrgas, the West German importer of Soviet gas? Earlier this year, the oil companies voted in a secret meeting to approve Ruhrgas's involvement in the pipeline. In view of the Presidential ban, we trust that the Three Sisters will patriotically forego their share of Communist-tainted profits from the venture, once it is completed.

DEMOCRATS UNITED
Christopher Hitchens
Norman Birnbaum

FALLING PRODUCTIVITY: A DEBATE
Samuel Bowles
David M. Gordon
and
Thomas E. Weisskopf
Harry Magdoff

AGRARIANS REVISITED
Jackson Lears

EDIE IN GLITTERLAND
Anna Shapiro

BREAKING THE COLD WAR ICE

EAST, WEST—IS THERE A THIRD WAY?

E. P. THOMPSON

What, we must ask as we proceed into the 1980s, is the cold war all about? The answer to this question can give us no comfort at all. If we look at the military scene, nothing is receding. On the contrary, the military establishments of both superpowers continue to grow each year. The cold war, in this sense, has broken free from its historical moorings and has acquired an independent inertial thrust of its own. What is the cold war now about? It is about itself.

We face here, in the grimmest sense, the "consequences of consequences." The cold war may be seen as a show put on the road by two rival entrepreneurs in 1946 or 1947. The show has grown bigger and bigger; the entrepreneurs have lost control of it, as it has thrown up its own managers, administrators, producers and a huge supporting cast, all of whom have a direct interest in its continuance, in its enlargement. Whatever happens, the show must go on.

The cold war has become a habit, an addiction. But it is a habit supported by very powerful material interests in each bloc: the military-industrial and research establishments of both sides, the security services and intelligence operations, and the political servants of these interests. These interests command a large (and growing) allocation of the skills and resources of each society; they influence the direction of each society's economic and social development; and it is in the interest *of* these interests to increase that allocation and to influence that direction even more.

It is in the very nature of this cold war show that there must be two adversaries: each move by

(*Continued on Page 48*)

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LETTERS.

ABC ON LAMPHERE'S NEWS

New York City

It is worth noting that for thirty years William A. Reuben ["ABC's Old News," *The Nation*, June 19] has promoted, in books, articles and speeches, the notions that no significant atomic secrets were ever stolen by American spies working for the Soviet Union and that cold war spies—Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, among others—were innocent. His book, *The Atom Spy Hoax*, contains some extraordinary assertions that contradict the analyses of British, Canadian and American intelligence agencies and denigrate the work of the Justice Department and the American judicial system. The Rosenberg case alone went to the U.S. Supreme Court seven times, was appealed twenty-three times and had been considered by 112 judges as of 1973.

With regard to Reuben's charges about former F.B.I. agent Robert Lamphere and ABC News presenting "old news": Lamphere supervised a secret code operation and was the liaison with the Army Security Agency, now known as the National Security Agency, from 1948 to 1955. He says he has "never spoken on or off the record about the broken K.G.B. code in relation to the Rosenberg case" until he spoke to ABC News. Stories about the code began to circulate in 1977, when Lamphere tried to get government authorization to write a book about the code operation based on his personal experience. In 1980 he received permission.

Two additional points: Lamphere has never been referred to in any book or article as a public source about the code in relation to the Rosenberg case; and author David C. Martin says he never spoke to William Reuben or said that Lamphere was his "source" in his book *Wilderness of Mirrors* as Reuben alleges. Lamphere's discussion of the code in relation to the Rosenberg case is eminently newsworthy—not "old news."

Finally, we used new film of the site where the code-breaking took place, not "an old film clip," as stated by Reuben. With regard to his comment that "the camera moves across the text of a book containing rows of numbers (not otherwise identified)": in the program, correspondent Marshall Frady says, "using raw data like this, supplied to it by the Army Security Agency . . . " The "raw data" was an example of the five-digit deciphered messages, similar to the messages sent by the K.G.B. in New York City to Moscow in 1944 and 1945 and used by the F.B.I. to identify Soviet spies. And Lamphere's quote, "We knew of the Rosenbergs' involvement with the Soviets through K.G.B. messages, through the testimony of numerous people, so there can be no question about their guilt," was corroborated by Justice Department and intelligence sources. People who worked for Lamphere led me to him as the "best authority."

I suggested to Reuben and Marshall Perlin, the attorney for the Rosenberg children, that they speak with Lamphere or his publisher, Random House, about their problems with the code story and the Rosenberg case. Neither Random House nor Lamphere heard from Perlin or Reuben.

We feel that Lamphere's statement was corroborated and was sufficiently important because of his role as F.B.I. supervisor of the code operation to bring to the attention of the American people.

Patricia K. Lynch
Investigative Reporter
ABC News Closeup
"J. Edgar Hoover"

REUBEN REPLIES

New York City

Although I fail to see the relevance of Patricia Lynch's reference to what I wrote thirty-one years ago, if it is worth noting it is worth getting the facts straight. I never claimed that "no significant atomic secrets were ever stolen by American spies." It was only after four years of research and study, including interviews with Albert Einstein, Harold Urey, Linus Pauling, Harlow Shapley and many other distinguished scientists, and only with the publication of my book *The Atom Spy Hoax* in 1955, that I first raised questions as to whether there was such a thing as a "secret of the A-bomb" to be stolen.

I assume the reason for Lynch's *ad hominem* attack is that she is unable to challenge my key point—that ABC's story was "old news." She claims that Robert Lamphere says he has "never spoken on or off the record about the broken K.G.B. code," but in both the 1977 Associated Press dispatch and the 1980 *Newsweek* story referred to in my article, he is the only person mentioned or cited. Lynch also claims that "author David C. Martin says he never spoke to William Reuben or said that Lamphere was his 'source' in his book *Wilderness of Mirrors*." I never claimed that I spoke to Martin; I said only that he had omitted Lamphere's name as his source *for the book*. In 1980, Martin published articles in *Playboy* and *Newsweek* dealing with the broken codes and the Rosenbergs; and he *has* acknowledged (as I wrote) Lamphere as his source for the story.

As for the program itself, I don't know what Lynch is complaining about. A film of the exterior of a building—whether it is "new film" or "an old film clip"—is scarcely proof of anything. Having the camera move across the text of a book containing rows of numbers as Marshall Frady says that "raw data like this" is what enabled a U.S. code expert to crack the Soviet spy code is meaningless. Lynch's explanation of these "raw data" would have more force, I submit, if these same statements came from Lamphere or were attributed to him or to any identified source, and if Frady had not said in the documentary that "this code breaking has *never* been acknowledged by the government" (italics in ABC's text of the program).

As for Lamphere, he is still ABC's only identifiable source. The program did not say if it was he who made the claim, swallowed whole by ABC, that 200 Soviet spies were arrested as a result of the broken code; in any event, this wild charge has never been made on the record by any government agency, nor has anything been published over the past thirty-five years to provide a clue to the identities of these phantoms. And what Lamphere said on camera falls far short of what Lynch, Frady and ABC's press department attribute to him.

Lynch's lumping together of me and Marshall Perlin seems to be a sort of guilt-by-association-with-the-lawyer-of-the-children-of-the-Rosenbergs. As to why I didn't call Lamphere or Random House, Lynch told me that his book was a year and a half away from completion and that he was not available for comment, as he was "in transit" from Massachusetts to the West Coast.

Finally, although neither ABC's documentary nor my article discussed the evidence in the Rosenberg case, Lynch says that the case "went to the U.S. Supreme Court seven times, was appealed twenty-three times and had been considered by 112 judges as of 1973." Very impressive, but very false and misleading, as is the unacknowledged source for these figures, Louis Nizer's 1973 book, *The Implosion Conspiracy*. What Justice Hugo Black said on June 19, 1953, the day of the executions, is more apposite: "It is not amiss to point out that this Court has never reviewed this record and has never affirmed the fairness of the trial below. Without an affirmance of the fairness of the trial by the highest court of the land, there may always be questions as to whether these executions were legally and rightfully carried out. I would still grant certiorari and let this Court approve or disapprove the fairness of the trial."

William A. Reuben

CORRECTION

In the article "Muncie Protects Its Own," by Richard Lingeman, in the June 12 issue of *The Nation*, the name of Theodore Caplow was misspelled. We apologize to Professor Caplow, who, as reported, is head of the Middletown III project and chief author of *Middletown Families*. *—The Editors*

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EDITORIALS.

Tears of Victory

In the June 26 issue of *The Nation*, A. J. Langguth wrote, "Something in me objects to a measuring of evil by the inch or by the pound. On the other hand, the question of relative numbers has to be addressed." Let us address it. Estimates of the number of Israelis killed by Palestinian terrorists since 1967 range from fewer than 400 to as high as 1,000. Estimates of the number of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians killed in the recent Israeli invasion of Lebanon now run upward of 10,000. For the cost in civilian lives lost and people uprooted from their homes, we condemn the invasion. But its strategic objectives were also overblown and misbegotten. Menachem Begin's war will not strengthen the security of the state of Israel; rather, it places Israel's survival in greater jeopardy.

The futile, random violence of the Palestine Liberation Organization shrinks to its true proportions when it is matched against the inexorable logic of state-orchestrated retaliation. The P.L.O. never had a chance of achieving its political objective of imposing a secular state on the whole of the original British mandate of Palestine by force of arms. By the same token, Israel can never dictate a permanent solution to the Palestinian problem by reason of its (present) overwhelming military supremacy. Unless it addresses the Palestinians' political grievances, young Palestinian men and women will continue to be ideologically driven to carry out their suicide missions inside Israel.

There has been much glib speculation in this country by people comfortably removed from the Lebanese carnage

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about the geopolitical "opportunities" presented by the defeat of the P.L.O.'s military arm and the banishment—or extermination—of its leadership. The means may be a bit messy, we are told, but regard the ends: peace in our time (for five, seven years?), a free Lebanon (if a government can be cobbled together), tourists cavorting on the sands of the Galilee (if the United States will assign the Rapid Deployment Force to buffer-zone duty).

The P.L.O.'s obituarists, however, confuse the part with the whole. They assume that it is a band of terrorist criminals grown into an army; destroy this army and you have eliminated the Palestinian national cause, the real source of terrorism. Actually, to destroy the P.L.O. in all of its manifestations in Lebanon would mean tearing down the schools and hospitals it ran and the factories, trade unions and housing projects it sponsored. It would mean doing away with the social welfare bureaucracy that was set up to aid the 600,000 Palestinians in the country. And indeed, much of this P.L.O. infrastructure has been swept away by the war.

As a political entity, as opposed to an army, the P.L.O. encompasses moderates and extremists. Now many of the former have almost certainly been converted into the latter, convinced that Israel will never countenance Palestinian self-determination in any form. Add to the renewed zeal of these converts the anger of the Arab countries at this latest humiliation, and it takes no great insight to see that Israel will emerge from this war more isolated from its neighbors than ever before.

Thus, Gen. Ariel Sharon's strategy has succeeded in destroying the P.L.O.'s most ineffectual arm, its militia, while leaving the Palestinian nationalist movement intact. Indeed, the P.L.O. may in the long run be strengthened if it shifts its energies toward the West Bank and Jordan, where its people predominate. Unless the Sharon strategy envisions a punishment as drastic as that wreaked by the Turks on the Armenian people in 1915, the Palestinian wound will continue to fester.

The consequences of this war for conservative Arab regimes cannot be overlooked. Walid Jumblatt, the leader of the Lebanese Druze community, has predicted, "Arab kings and presidents will reap the historical wrath of what has happened here."

The momentous march of events in Lebanon was met in Washington by disarray, epitomized by Alexander Haig's departure. As portrayed by the pundits, the great debate between the White House and the Secretary of State resolved itself into a conflict between the pro-Israelis (Haig) and the Arabists (Weinberger), with Judge Clark finally stepping in to assert the primacy of the Oval Office. But while the White House staff and Haig fiddled with the chain of command, a nation burned. As the "debate" went on over whether to chastise the Begin government publicly or privately, nothing was done to check the Israeli Army. There was only the hope that a truce could be negotiated by Philip Habib to prevent the destruction of West Beirut. Meanwhile, the political problem of finding a territorial compromise that would recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, as well as Israel's existence as a state, remains as far from solution as ever.

Faulty Reporting

Because of "serious fallacies" in reporting on human rights by the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador, the information the State Department gives to Congress and the American public is "weak at its base." That is the conclusion of a recent study by Americas Watch, a privately funded organization that monitors human rights. The study also charges that "the State Department has shown only selective respect for the human rights findings" of the embassy and that the "basis for selectivity appears to be political." According to the report, "important Embassy data on human rights become progressively more distorted and mishandled" in the transmittal process. Distortions occur in Washington when the data are used in the annual Country Report and then in the President's certification of progress in correcting human rights abuses, which is required before Congress approves further aid.

Americas Watch contrasts U.S. government reporting on human rights in El Salvador with that of Socorro Juridico, the legal aid office affiliated with the Archdiocese Office of San Salvador (recently renamed Tutela Legal del Arzobispado—Legal Trusteeship Office of the Archdiocese.) Socorro Juridico's reporting on human rights violations "was sound," the study found, and "its figures provide a valid guideline to official repression, within limitations due to the political situation." The legal aid office documented that 13,533 civilians were murdered by security forces or officially sanctioned paramilitary groups during 1981 and that 2,020 civilians were murdered by such forces from January 1 to April 23, 1982.

The Americas Watch study also indicates that the U.S. Embassy's figures on rights violations are compiled from articles in the San Salvador press. But these newspapers all hew to the military's rightist line and are subject to censorship under the country's security law. Thus, the published figures "are, *de facto*, based on the military's interpretation of events." This interpretation, the study notes, inevitably colors the embassy's human rights reporting: "The military tends to explain its raids on neighborhoods as 'armed confrontations' with guerrillas and to deny witnesses' reports that residents have been taken from their homes and shot."

Occasionally, the U.S. Embassy has conducted independent investigations and has uncovered human rights abuses not reported in the San Salvador newspapers. But these findings, Americas Watch says, go unmentioned in embassy cables to the State Department.

Similarly, the State Department's Country Report on El Salvador for 1981 "ignores not only independent human rights information but also, in some important areas, the analysis of its own primary source, the San Salvador embassy." Thus, Americas Watch says, "the connection between the security forces and unacknowledged rightist

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What Groundswell

Congress's overwhelming support for extending the Voting Rights Act demonstrated that Attorney General William French Smith's political judgment is as shallow as his moral sensitivities. Last January, Smith warned Federal judges that they had better heed "the groundswell of conservatism evidenced by the 1980 elections." Smith also read the electoral auguries as unfavorable to civil rights and hence threw his support behind nullification of the voting act.

For a time it seemed he was backing the right horse. When Congress convened in January 1981, extension of the act faced a bleak future. Just a year earlier, the Supreme Court, seemingly anticipating Smith's advice, ruled in a case involving a Mobile, Alabama, election that proof of discriminatory *intent* was required before local election laws could be overturned for violating minority rights. Previously, those challenging electoral laws needed only to prove that the *effect* of such laws was discriminatory.

In 1981, civil rights forces began mobilizing their own groundswell. The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights organized a massive grass-roots campaign. The goal was ambitious: not just extending the act but overriding the proof-of-intent requirement laid down in the Mobile decision as well. The campaign was a stunning success. On October 5, 1981, the House voted 389 to 24 to extend a key section of the act for twenty-five years and to reinstate the "effect" test.

Although he had kept quiet while the House was considering this bill, after its passage Attorney General Smith swung into action. First, he dissuaded President Reagan from endorsing the House legislation, and then he mounted a vigorous campaign in the press and on Capitol Hill against restoration of the effect test.

He would have been better off staying home and looking after his tax shelters. Easily brushing aside a threatened Jesse Helms filibuster, on June 18 the Senate passed its own bill, which was close to the House's in substance, by a crushing 85-to-8 margin. The House swiftly adopted the Senate version—unanimously—and sent it to the White House, where, in a belated effort to repair the political damage resulting from his Attorney General's poor advice, Reagan announced that he would sign the renewed act.

The passage of the Voting Rights Act proved that Smith's cynical reading of the election returns was dead wrong. Not only did Congress strengthen civil rights enforcement in the face of a popular President's opposition but, in an implicit rejection of Smith's warning to the judiciary, it nullified the Supreme Court's holding in the Mobile case. In doing so, it heeded the true groundswell.

The outcry against Reagan's hit-and-run effort to grant tax exemptions to private schools that racially discriminate and the criticism of his irresponsible nominations to the Civil Rights and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commissions showed that most Americans are still committed to equal justice. The 1980 elections may have been a mandate for change, but not the kind urged by William French Smith.

ARTICLES.

DEMOCRATS UNITED

Fashion Parade In Philadelphia

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

"Unity" is one of those objectives that, once desired, are very easily attained. That is how it may be distinguished from "clarity," say, or "principle." The lowest common denominator is a simple and humble achievement, and in politics it is always the chief goal of the mediocre.

For the Democratic Party at its midterm conference in Philadelphia, unity was a cinch. What did it take? It took the exclusion, from the meeting and from every speech, of the forty-seven so-called "boll weevils" without whose votes President Reagan's "unfairness" would not present such an easy target. It took an agenda and a format designed to exclude voting or debate, let alone dissent. It took a formless venue, usually employed for dog shows, like the Philadelphia Civic Center. Walking around this dump was like being lost in Alphaville—except that every corridor and escalator led back to the subterranean trailer park where the vagrant candidates had pitched their medicine-show wagons in a half-circle. Queries or awkward objections were met with smiles, free drinks, stupefying bundles of handouts and invitations to lavish receptions. Any mention of political argument made the perfectly formed young campaign staffers visibly nervous.

And such receptions. It was the mark of a real hick to pay for your own drink. Boeing and Avon co-sponsored the women's party, which I thought was a sweet touch. Edward Kennedy threw a very costly bash in a giant mall at which thousands devoured lobster and swilled bourbon and had politics driven out of their pretty heads by a raucous band. Even at the Democratic Socialist gathering, which at least had the decency to run a cash bar, there was a special cheer and a mention for "progressive businessman" Bernard Rapoport, an old poseur who wouldn't have got the time of day but for the fistfuls he made in the insurance business in Waco. This generalized atmosphere of vulgarity might not have been so obnoxious if it hadn't been so well

Christopher Hitchens is a contributing editor of The Nation.

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matched with the allegedly "serious business" of the daytime sessions.

These, too, featured fashion designers trying to impress with their revamped lines. Wrinkled old models paraded with fixed smiles. Like their Parisian counterparts they hate to be upstaged—which they were, twice, by the Reaganites. First, Richard Richards, the Republican national chairman, threw his own press conference in the city. So appalled was Democratic chairman Charles Manatt by this intrusion of politics and controversy that he described it as "tacky"—an excellent choice of term. Then, of course, there was the resignation of General Haig to divert the limelight. But the old troupers kept gallantly coming on. They advanced, past the hand-wringing and unctuous Manatt, to the mike. Then they hauled their wretched wives into view (*why* do they do that?). Then they read speeches saying that the rich were getting richer and—wait for it—the poor poorer. Then the wives again (why?). Then grateful acknowledgment of polite applause.

The press consensus is that Walter Mondale was Friday's premier mannequin. I find this slightly unfair to Alan Cranston, who may be an elderly jock but who did make an effort at seriousness. Mondale was just the usual pastiche of homages to F.D.R. and man-of-the-people impersonations. Many delegates said, when prompted on cue by reporters, that he reminded them of Hubert Humphrey. I'm very much afraid that these delegates may be right. He certainly reminded me of Eugene McCarthy's observation that "Walter has the soul of a vice president." The remaining speakers were a torment to hear, except for Ernest Hollings, who was incomprehensible when he wasn't inaudible. (John Glenn, by the way, looks and sounds too much like Jerry Ford.)

Nor were the "workshops" any better. The party machine never lost control for an instant, and its *fait accompli* agenda was barely altered. "The freeze" (as I suppose we had better get used to calling it) was both endorsed and diluted—more the former than the latter, since Ben Wattenberg's insertion of "parity" with the Soviet Union is rather more forceful than the mushheads' brave alteration of "welcome" to "support."

The destruction of Lebanon was warmly endorsed; it seems Democrats believe that terrorism and the Soviet Union have both been *weakened* by the events of the last few weeks. Time, and one or two other things, will tell. Then, off to another round of clambakes and free booze.

After all this, and especially after the insipid display of candidates on Friday, it was not surprising that the delegates found themselves prey to the fleshy charms of the senior Senator from Massachusetts. He managed to distinguish himself from the routine in two ways. First, by getting separate billing on Sunday morning. Second, by bringing *three* female relatives onto the podium with him, as if to say, "I may not have a wife, but oh boy, do I have a family." He read through his text almost word perfect, none of his aides having told him that three of its key points and two of its bright phrases had already been uttered by previous speakers (one of them only half an hour before). The Senator should have guessed that a line as corny as "Here in Philadelphia . . . we must hold this truth to be self-evident—that not only all men, but all people, are created, etc." would have been pressed into service on day one.

He was almost incandescent with insincerity as he worked his way through the midnight-oil one-liners. He quoted Tennyson (not an easy poet for the platform) as if reading from the Philadelphia telephone directory. He made an almost imperceptible attack on neoliberalism, but balanced it quickly with a neoliberal attack on German and Japanese "colonization" of the American economy. It was a something for everyone speech, so there was something for everyone to applaud, so he got his ovation. Easy.

Too easy, like the whole sorry weekend. The Democrats may or may not contrive a serious and distinctive platform for 1984 (their chances of a serious and distinctive candidate look perilously slender already). But they won't do so if they continue to let the party managers turn them, "unified," into stone by holding up the Gorgon's head of Ronald Reagan every time somebody raises a squeak. □

Program Without The Players

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

Even the most modest Democratic Party programs will fail if discussions of our politics are confined within their present limits. The road beyond those limits runs through conflict: authentically new ideas always evoke resistance. In these circumstances, the emphasis on programmatic unity at the party's midterm conference was excessive.

Alexander Haig's resignation made the point. With the departure of Haig, the notion of Atlantic unity exits, forever, from the Washington foreign policy stage—only two decades after its disappearance from the real world. The Republicans' foreign policy apparatus has collapsed not because of conflicts of personality or competing strategies. It has disintegrated because, caught between a world unwilling to accept American domination and an American public unwilling to pay the price for it, the foreign policy elite is impotent. Charles Shultz, too, sooner rather than later, will be ground to pieces between these millstones.

With some honorable exceptions, (Senators Tsongas and Kennedy), the Democrats of Philadelphia missed this point. The party attempted to present itself as uniquely qualified to administer our empire—by denying that we really have one. The invasion of Lebanon, a few objections of conscience dismissed, was transmuted into a sacred struggle for the liberation of that country—led by those disinterested

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descendants of the Prophets, Begin and Sharon. The Republicans have for some time evoked the amused contempt of progressives by pretending that their party is large enough for both the sophisticates of Wall Street and the enraged provincials of the Moral Majority (or the Chamber of Commerce). What can we say about the Democrats when they announce the holy union of the nuclear freeze movement with the Committee on the Present Danger? The debate on foreign policy concluded with the adoption of a statement to which the delegates attached enough individual mental reservations and special interpretations to overwhelm a particularly intense ecclesiastical synod. To be sure, the Democratic Party is a church and not a sect. All the more reason for it to have responded less ambiguously to a mass movement which appears to have won the moral imagination of a majority of the nation.

The other mass movement that offers a chance of victory to the party is the women's movement. The conference was conspicuous both for the participation of large numbers of women and for their determination to stick by their own political agenda. They now see that appealing to legislatures made up predominantly of men was not the way to get the Equal Rights Amendment passed; they propose to put women in the statehouses, instead. Many of their leaders also see that a considerable sector of business has an interest in maintaining a reserve army of cheap female labor.

It is not an impossibly large step from this insight to the formation of a coalition with the unions on a program that would encompass some of the aims of the movement for economic democracy. Women have been severely punished by Reagan's economic policies and a majority of them are anti-Republican. Once upon a time, women were supposedly conservative. Perhaps, but now they appear to be well ahead of the party that claimed to speak for them. The Democrats are still pursuing an additive politics, putting grievances together one by one, instead of seeking new common denominators. The convenient word, pragmatism, can also point to historical obtuseness.

The Democrats' economic program is in fact interesting. The proposal to put labor and consumer representatives on the Federal Reserve Board would constitute a minor American revolution. The notion of a fiscal distinction between productive and nonproductive investment would constitute another, appreciably larger, revolution. The Democrats seemed to be talking about economic planning in sign language of a particularly arcane kind. In short, the return to the old American value of fairness called for by the conference entails building that new America of which so many Democrats speak. The trouble is, a large number of us are comfortably installed in the old one. The demonstrators who invaded the discussions of social programs over lobster and roast beef had an eye for ideological contradictions.

To be sure, the Democrats were addressing a very special public; themselves. In the end, the sessions on campaigning and political organizing weighed more heavily with those who are certain to have little say in the next Democratic President's program than did programmatic arguments. Chairman Charles Manatt has an acute sense of limits, and within these, his priorities are clear and indisputable. For Democrats, indeed, the candidate is the program. Whether a candidate seeks to alter the limits or not, only an exceptional President can do so. Reagan has failed at that domestically, just as Carter failed in foreign affairs. A President Edward Kennedy, of course, would have to master these explosive contradictions within his Administration. Clearly, however, we are getting ahead of ourselves. □

LOW-POWER TELEVISION

Many Voices or More Markets?

ERIC SCHMUCKLER

Recently, the Federal Communications Commission authorized the accelerated development of low-power television, raising hopes that minority, consumer, community and other citizens' groups will have increased access to the public airwaves, hitherto dominated by powerful commercial interests. As the name implies, low-power television (LPTV) broadcasts a signal over an area of ten to fifteen miles, compared with UHF, which has a range of forty-five to sixty miles. LPTV is the ideal medium for community-based, locally controlled broadcasting. But the F.C.C.'s guidelines for the granting of low-power TV licenses, as is evident from those that have already been awarded, make it likely that LPTV will become the preserve of the corporate hucksters.

Low-power TV is a new application of an old technology. It derives from the discovery that translators, the devices used to amplify broadcast signals in remote areas, can be modified, at relatively low cost, to emit their own beams. In other words, a relay mechanism can be altered to originate broadcasts. Unlike cable TV, low-power TV requires no extra equipment; it is picked up by home antennas. Since the beams pass between existing broadcast signals, metropolitan areas, where numerous TV signals saturate the airwaves, can accommodate only a few LPTV outlets, while rural locations can take a large number of them.

Because each LPTV station has such a limited range, it would not provide a large enough market to attract major corporate advertisers, except in big cities. However, the translators can be equipped to receive signals from satellites, and so a series of LPTV stations could be linked to form an advertiser-supported commercial network, or to carry the scrambled signal of a pay-television service. Thus, programming need not originate locally. It doesn't take much money to set up an LPTV broadcasting facility. Installing a UHF station costs about $2 million, but an LPTV outlet can be set up for as little as $100,000. The combination of these factors makes it possible to form new national broadcast

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networks at a fraction of the previous cost.

The F.C.C.'s guidelines for LPTV favor the formation of more national TV networks rather than networks that would provide locally controlled programming. Indeed, F.C.C. chairman Mark Fowler was quoted in *The New York Times* of March 5 as saying that people should be encouraged to "accumulate many stations so that they can set up competing networks." Soon after the commission began accepting applications for LPTV licenses a year and a half ago, it imposed a fifteen-station limit on each grantee. After vigorous lobbying by, among others, Sears, Roebuck & Company, the F.C.C. eliminated the ceiling.

Sears has applied for licenses for more than 145 low-power stations and has announced its intention to set up a national country-music network. The venture-capital subsidiary for these applications is ironically named the Neighborhood TV Company. Critics contend that such a network would become a televised Sears catalogue, with a toll-free number for telephone orders crawling across the bottom of the screen.

Another troubling development is the unholy alliance that has sprung up between minority groups and established broadcasting companies seeking LPTV licenses—an arrangement known in communications-industry vernacular as "rent a minority." The impetus for these unlikely partnerships comes from the F.C.C.'s promise to give special consideration to license applications from minority groups. The guidelines for this electronic affirmative-action program are vague, however, and Fowler opposes the whole idea. Nevertheless, the minority groups, who lack the capital to finance the stations, and the broadcasters, who have the money but not the assurance of a license, need one another. The obvious answer is for them to join forces, which was precisely what happened when the Community Television Network, a minority-owned network, signed a pact with Gene Autry's Golden West Broadcasting Company.

The Community Television Network wanted to establish a national network in the top dozen markets that would feature black-oriented programming, but the costs of equipping the LPTV outlets and producing or acquiring enough programs were beyond the group's means. Under the agreement with Golden West, the low-rated daytime hours would be devoted to minority programming, while prime-time hours would be reserved for the corporation's own pay-TV network. The F.C.C. guidelines would not restrict such use of minority ownership by established communications concerns. The F.C.C. did institute a rule that bars low-power grantees from selling their LPTV licenses as soon as they had won them. This regulation was adopted over the protests of Fowler (who *was* able to kill a proposal to limit LPTV franchises to local owners).

Predictably enough, in awarding the first batch of licenses, the F.C.C. favored established companies over independent community programmers. Of the thirty-two licenses granted, the bulk went to companies with communications industry interests, including a TV broadcaster, a microwave systems operator, several publishers and Gannett, the nation's largest newspaper chain. The F.C.C. seems to have granted the licenses on the basis of technical experience and solid financing. Yet these criteria presume that LPTV will serve as a national rather than as a local medium. Their effect is to exclude local independent programmers from the low-power technology that is uniquely appropriate to them.

Fowler's telecommunications policy is predicated on a rather naïve faith in the free-market system and the belief that the public interest is best served by giving consumers freedom of choice. But how much choice will they have if Sears and other huge companies use their financial resources and technological sophistication to pre-empt community programmers? The F.C.C. is abdicating its regulatory function at a time when the communications revolution is becoming more and more complex.

The ways in which the F.C.C. fosters the development of low-power television take on special relevance in light of the trend toward a handful of major corporations dominating new broadcast technologies. These companies include such communications giants as Time Inc., Warner Communica-

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tions, Westinghouse, ABC, CBS and RCA, and they are in the forefront for a good reason: most of the developing technologies—cable TV and information services, for example—require staggering investments in capital and research that are far beyond the capacities of community-based programmers.

The revolution in communications technology promised an expanded electronic village in which a wider range of voices would be heard. Although the F.C.C. claims that greater competition and less government interference will achieve this goal, the competition it envisages is limited to large corporations with the financial resources to invest in unproved technologies. It is too early to say for sure that the result will be an oligopolistic control of information, but the economic logic of the present situation points to that outcome.

Such a communications future would be only quantitatively different from what we have today, with no improvement in quality. Even with a multiplicity of media, we could end up with merely more of the same: abundance without variety. Recent decisions by the F.C.C. and the courts offer little encouragement. The bright promise of increased public access to the airwaves that local cable systems once held was dimmed by a 1979 Supreme Court decision that bars municipalities from requiring cable systems to provide public access channels and studios [see Thomas J. McGrew, "Whose Right is Righter?" *The Nation*, March 20]. The Court's decision in the A.T.&T. antitrust case, divesting the corporation of its local operating companies, has paved the way for it to enter (and dominate) the growing fields of data transmission, videotext, electronic mail and other information services [see Ronald Brownstein, "The Promise and the Problems," *The Nation*, January 30]. And Congress is considering a number of revisions of the 1934 Communications Act, many of which remove the criteria of "the public interest, convenience and necessity," which have been the cornerstone of American telecommunications policy.

Because of its relative inexpensiveness and local reach, LPTV is ideally suited to be used as a community forum. Its stations can address minority interests, promote cultural diversity, facilitate discussion of local issues and give all citizens access to the airwaves which they in fact own. They could serve as electronic town meetings at which community residents could air their views.

The F.C.C. should repudiate the laissez-faire ideology of its chairman and seek to nurture local stations serving local needs. The first step would be to restrict multiple ownership; absentee license holders and cross-ownership of LPTV outlets should also be discouraged. One proposal calls for setting aside at least one low-power station in each municipality to be owned and managed by the local government, which would either donate or sell air time to qualified community members. Obviously, such a scheme would raise many questions, such as who would put up the seed money, who would finance local programmers and who would decide which citizens are "qualified" to air their views. Still, the idea merits investigation.

Unless the F.C.C. vigorously defends the public's right to the broadcast spectrum, low-power television will be usurped by the same advertising and commercial concerns that are now asserting their domination over other innovative technologies—cable, information-retrieval services, viewer interaction and direct broadcast satellites. The advent of low-power TV offers a singular opportunity to establish authentic, community-based communications in the spirit of the Communications Act. It is up to the F.C.C. to insure that the communications revolution is accompanied by a multitude of new voices, rather than merely by new markets to exploit. □

FALLING PRODUCTIVITY

At the Heart of Economic Decline

SAMUEL BOWLES, DAVID M. GORDON AND THOMAS E. WEISSKOPF

In his article "The Economists' New Clothes" [*The Nation*, March 27], Harry Magdoff, co-editor of *Monthly Review* and one of the most insightful observers of the current economic scene, argues that the widely heralded slowdown in the growth of productivity in the United States is a statistical fiction. We disagree. We think there has been a real and accelerating slowdown in the growth of hourly output in this country.

Instead of questioning the productivity statistics, progressives would be better advised to focus their attacks on the "capital-shortage" theory. This is an explanation of the productivity slowdown advanced by the purveyors of trickle-down economics in their effort to justify the redistribution of wealth from the needy to the greedy. The capital-shortage theory, not the measurement of productivity growth, is the emperor with no clothes.

There is much in Magdoff's article with which we *can* agree. Economists, public officials and media pundits have all been waving a variety of distress flags—including warnings about lagging productivity—as part of a propaganda campaign for corporate tax relief and reductions in real wages. Although we do not believe that the misuse of productivity statistics is an essential element in this propaganda onslaught, we agree with Magdoff that there are serious flaws in the official estimates of productivity in some sectors, particularly in private and government services. It is

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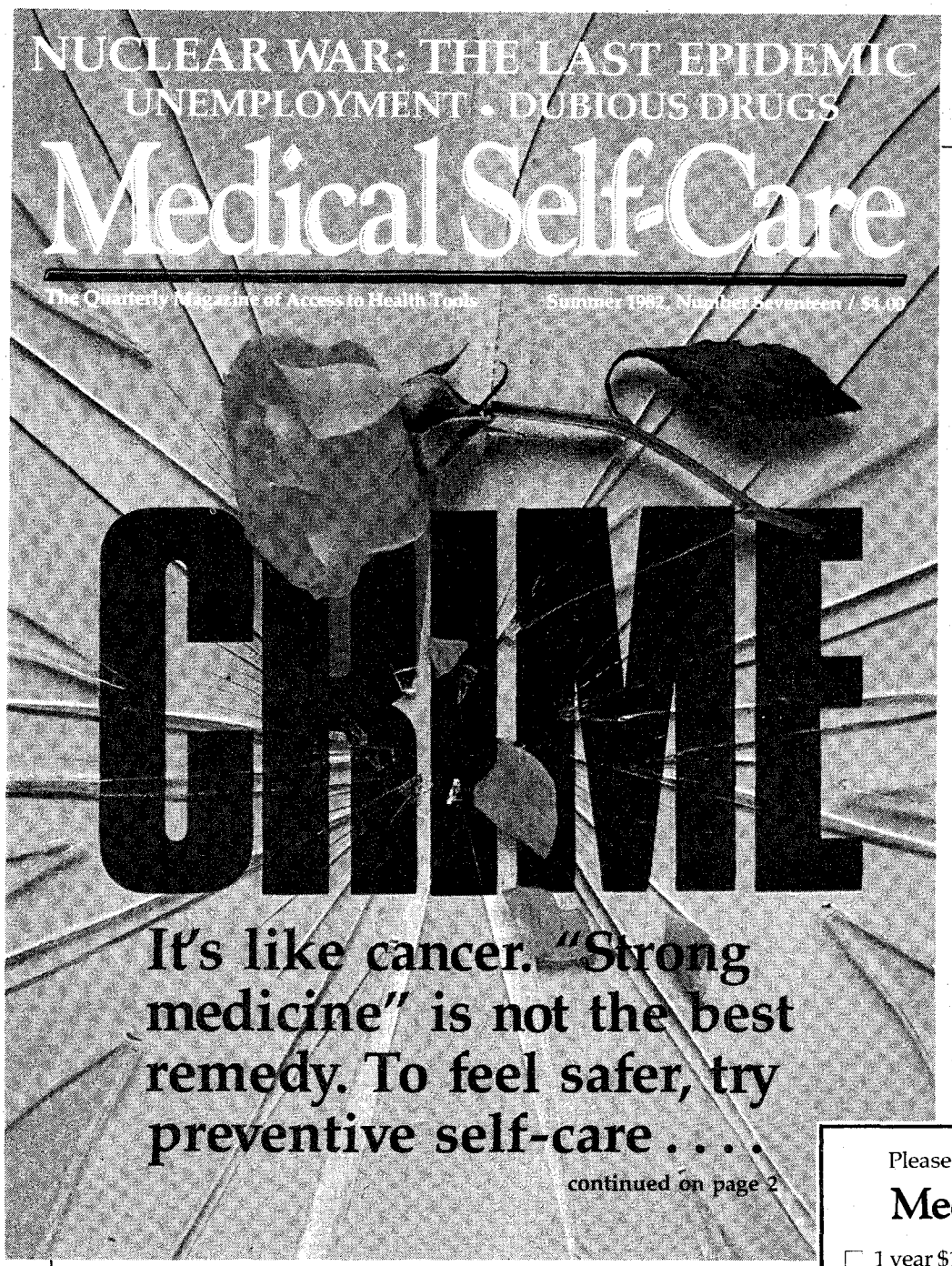
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also obvious, as Magdoff emphasizes, that there has been a significant shift in the composition of the American labor force in the past decade or so, with a rising proportion of workers in service industries and a declining proportion in goods-producing industries.

We also agree with the following assertions of Magdoff's conclusion:

> It is in the nature of advanced capitalism . . . to neglect the enormous potential production of goods and services needed for a better and more secure life and to devote more and more energy to such pursuits as redundant distribution, sales promotion, finance, tax avoidance, merger activity, speculation and the like. The economic troubles . . . [have] very much to do with the misallocation and waste of productive resources and effort.

With so much agreement, why complain about the rest? It is not simply that we disagree with the part of Magdoff's conclusion that we omitted from the preceding quote—that the country's economic troubles "have very little to do with productivity." Much more important, we are convinced that progressives must understand the links between declining productivity growth and the current economic crisis in order to improve their analysis of the crisis *and* develop appropriate socialist-democratic responses that are economically feasible and politically persuasive.

What is the evidence of a slowdown in productivity growth? We present the relevant data in the accompanying table. The figures, based on information compiled by the Federal government, show the average rates of growth of output per hour of work during three successive postwar periods. (Because it is widely recognized that productivity is sensitive to business-cycle fluctuations, our period endpoints are years in which the U.S. economy reached a cyclical peak, measured by the ratio of actual to potential gross national product.)

The first row in the table shows the familiar result for the domestic economy. After averaging almost 3 percent each year from 1948 to 1966, the growth of real output per hour of work declined to barely more than 2 percent from 1966 to 1973, and then to less than 1 percent from 1973 to 1979. At the 1948-66 rate, average productivity would double every twenty-four years; at the 1973-79 rate, every seventy-two years. Since 1979, growth in output per hour of work has virtually ground to a halt.

Magdoff is right to question these aggregate statistics. They include some sectors of the economy in which the real value of output is nearly impossible to measure because there is no market in which the nominal dollar value—let alone the inflation-adjusted real value—is determined. Thus, government agencies and many private services should be excluded from the estimates. In response to this problem, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (B.L.S.) recently compiled an additional series that excludes all sectors in which market value cannot be measured and provides a productivity index for the "private business" sector. The growth rates for this set of industries are shown in the second row of the table. Far from eliminating the productivity slowdown, the exclusion of the most hard-to-measure sectors actually results in an even more severe decline in productivity growth.

Yet there may still be reason to question the evidence pointing to a productivity slowdown. The Bureau of Labor Statistics series does include some service sectors—e.g., trade, finance and communications—in which it is admittedly more difficult to measure output than it is in goods-producing industries.

This source of skepticism can be eliminated by focusing solely on goods-producing industries, the one sector in which Magdoff admits that "it is possible to arrive at a plausible measure of productivity." Productivity growth rates for each of the six goods-producing industries are shown in the next rows of the table. We can see that there was a substantial slowdown during the postwar period in every one of these industries. With the exception of manufacturing, this slowdown proceeded in two steps, from 1948-66 to 1966-73 and from 1966-73 to 1973-79. As a comparison between these data and the parallel tabulations for the service industries (listed in the final six rows of the table) shows, Magdoff's inference is incorrect: Contrary to the view that the productivity slowdown has been caused by a shift of employment into the service industries, goods-producing industries show more of a slowdown in productivity growth than does the service sector.

There is an additional statistical comparison that focuses directly on employment shifts among sectors. Suppose that the goods-producing sector and the service sector had maintained their rates of growth in hourly output. How much of the decline in productivity growth could be attributed to the shift of employment into the less expansive services?

TRENDS IN U.S. PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH
(Average Annual % Growth of Real Output Per Hour)

	1948-66	1966-73	1973-79
AGGREGATE SECTORS			
Whole Domestic Economy	2.88	2.10	0.97
Private Business	3.17	2.34	0.80
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES			
Agriculture	4.9	3.1	2.5
Mining	4.4	2.1	-5.2
Construction	2.8	-1.0	-2.8
Manufacturing	2.9	3.3	1.5
Utilities	6.3	3.3	1.0
Transportation	3.4	2.2	1.2
All Goods-Producing Industries	3.72	2.78	0.90
SERVICE INDUSTRIES			
Communications	5.3	4.8	6.0
Trade	2.9	2.6	0.8
Finance, etc.	2.0	0.5	0.6
Other Private Services	1.3	1.5	0.4
Government Services	0.2	0.7	0.4
All Service Industries	1.94	1.79	1.06

Sources of data: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and, in the case of "Private Business," U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

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Calculations based on the data in the table on page 45 suggest that only about 12 percent of the total decline in productivity growth could be attributed to the shift from goods to services. In short, not much.

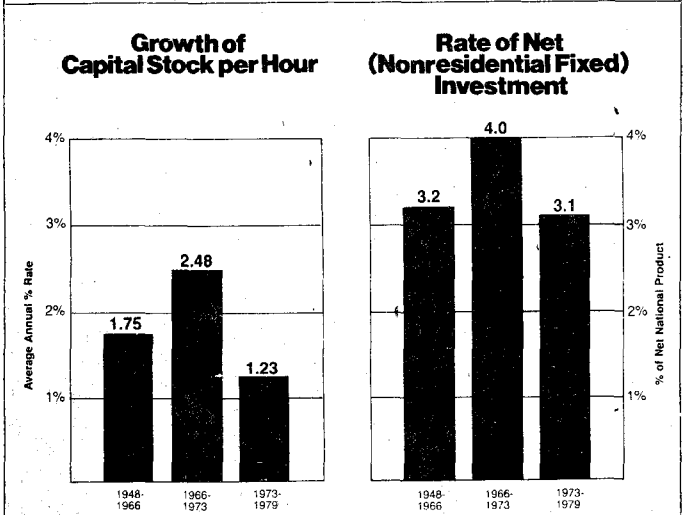
We conclude, on the basis of these data, that the slowdown in productivity growth in the United States is well established and pervasive. We share with Magdoff some serious reservations about the use of the benign term "productivity" to refer to output per worker hour, for it can embrace both an increase in efficiency (its benign connotation) and a speedup of production that cuts corners on workers' welfare and safety (a much less benign meaning). But that is another issue. Whatever we call this index, its growth has slowed.

The capital-shortage explanation of this productivity slowdown dissolves upon careful examination. (This is not, surely, a point of disagreement between us and Magdoff, since he and his co-editor, Paul Sweezy, have taken the lead in debunking the capital-shortage theory in *Monthly Review*.)

According to that theory, the productivity slowdown has resulted from insufficient investment in buildings and machines due to a shortage of investable resources. This shortage is attributed to a squeeze on profits caused by rising wage demands and more insistent governmental claims on the private sector; e.g., high corporate taxes, added health and safety requirements and the like. It is this kind of analysis—not the misuse of productivity statistics—that underlies the propaganda onslaught in favor of tax relief for the rich, wage cuts for the poor and cutbacks in government social programs. But the capital-shortage theory simply does not square with the facts about the postwar development of the U.S. economy.

There are two measures relevant to the capital-shortage explanation—the first is capital intensity, the ratio of capital stock to hours of work; the second is the investment rate, the share of available resources devoted to productive investment.

A Capital Shortage?



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

Our first table shows that productivity growth began to slow in the 1966-73 period. But, as the accompanying diagram indicates, neither capital-shortage measure behaved as it should have during this earlier period. The ratio of capital stock to hours of work in the private business sector actually grew more rapidly from 1966 to 1973 than it did from 1948 to 1966; according to the capital-shortage theory, it should have declined as a cause of declining productivity growth. Similarly, the rate of nonresidential fixed investment was significantly higher in 1966-73 than it was in 1948-66. Only *after* 1973 did the growth of capital intensity begin to slow and the investment rate begin to decline. The fall in investment was thus not a cause but more likely an effect of the deterioration of the economy after 1966.

Even after 1973, there is little evidence to support the allegation that business investment was squeezed by rising claims from workers and the state. A fall in investment does not logically demonstrate a shortage of investable resources; it could be that those resources were simply flowing elsewhere. Actually, there was no such shortage after 1973. In recent years, the U.S. economy has shown relatively low levels of capacity utilization; that is, we have not been using the resources we have. In a time of idle workers and idle factories, it would not strain available resources to produce more capital goods.

The continuing availability of capital is shown by data on the real cost of borrowing funds for investment—an indicator akin to the interest rate (adjusted for inflation). If the capital-shortage view were correct, the real cost of borrowing would have increased as potential borrowers competed with one another for fewer and fewer available dollars. But the real cost of borrowing funds for investment was considerably *lower* during the 1970s than it was during the 1960s. This supports the conclusion that lagging investment after 1973 was not the result of a limitation on the *supply* of investable resources but rather an effect of the declining *demand* among corporations for investment projects in the United States.

The task for progressive analysts of the U.S. economic crisis, then, is to explain the productivity slowdown, not to explain it away. Beginning in the mid-1960s, something happened to our economy that seriously retarded productivity growth. The resulting productivity slowdown explains why the growth in workers' real take-home pay has stagnated since the mid-1960s at the same time as the rate of profit on domestic operations of U.S. firms has declined. Moreover, the slowdown can very plausibly be considered one of the primary causes of the worsening trade-off between inflation and unemployment in the United States. When productivity growth declines, the struggle over the distribution of a more slowly growing economic pie intensifies; this exacerbates inflationary pressures and encourages the Federal government to pursue restrictive unemployment-generating fiscal and monetary policies in an effort to curb wage increases and inflation.

We argue, in short, that the productivity slowdown lies at the heart of the U.S. economic crisis. □

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A Statistical Fiction

HARRY MAGDOFF

This debate reminds me of a story popular at City College of New York in the late 1920s and 1930s. The great man on campus was Morris Raphael Cohen, the philosopher. It is told that after one of Cohen's lectures, Sidney Hook, then a student of his, rose to ask one of those ten-minute questions that start, "Isn't it a fact, professor, that . . ." At the end of which Cohen is supposed to have replied, "As a matter of fact, it isn't. And if it were, so what?"

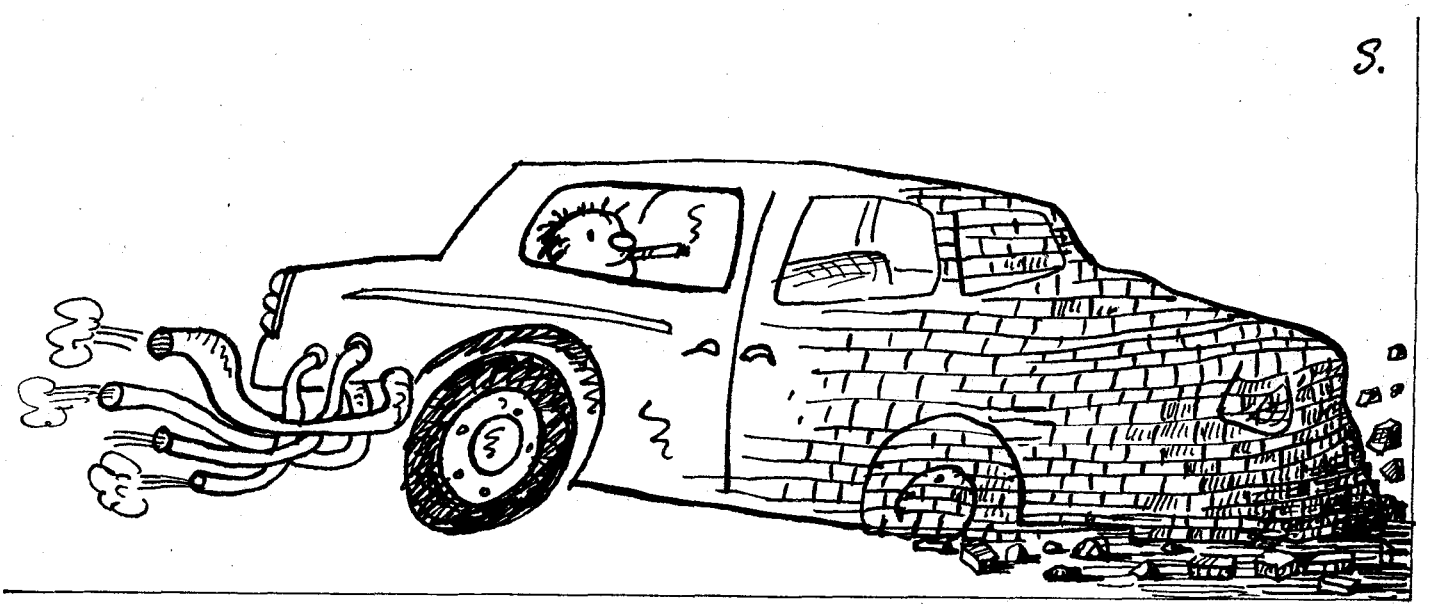
On what grounds do my friendly critics base their faith in the Department of Commerce's and the Bureau of Labor Statistics' productivity indexes? Presumably they base it on the similarities between the behavior of the index for different economic sectors and for the private economy as a whole. But that in no way meets the argument that the official productivity measures are statistical fictions.

What is wrong with the overall index is also wrong with each of its parts, since every one of them is constructed in the same flawed way. The government's statistical technique rests on the assumption that money value—the price of goods and services in the marketplace (adjusted for inflation)—is a true measure of the quantity and quality of the goods and services produced. This assumption is fully accepted by Bowles, Gordon and Weisskopf. In fact, the reason they endorse the B.L.S.'s adjustment of the overall index by eliminating the government sector is that "there is simply no market in which the nominal dollar value . . . can be observed." But my *Nation* article dealt only with the productivity index for the private sector. And the issue I raised was precisely the validity of using money and the market to measure the physical volume of production. Does an investment banker who earns $1.5 million a year floating bonds and promoting mergers produce 100 times more services than a $15,000-a-year supermarket cashier and 75 times more than a $20,000-a-year nurse? For that matter, how does one compare quantitatively the volume of services produced per hour by a nurse and a cashier?

The point is that market values are no guide to differences in quality and quantity of production. This should be especially clear for service occupations, where there is no way to translate the quality of the services performed into quantity of production. But the money yardstick is also a faulty measure of the output of goods. The starkest example of this is found in the construction industry. According to the table in the preceding article, productivity in the construction industry declined by 2.8 percent a year between 1973 and 1979. But field studies by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of selected types of construction show that labor productivity per square foot and per $1,000 worth of construction *increased* substantially in those years. This discrepancy was discussed in *Business Week* (February 25, 1980) under the headline "A productivity drop that nobody believes."

This unbelievable productivity index is not a simple statistical fluke but a reflection of what is wrong with the method used for measuring each of the economic sectors. "Construction" covers a wide range of projects: office buildings, sewers, roads, shopping centers, skyscrapers and one-family houses. The labor required per square foot of construction varies from one project to another, and the kinds of construction in which the bulk of the industry is engaged changes over time. An index that uses dollar value to measure production obscures and distorts the underlying variations. That is why the productivity of all construction, so measured, can show a decline, while the productivity of the component parts, if measured in terms of physical units of output, can show an increase. (For a fuller explanation, see Harry Magdoff and Paul Sweezy, *The Deepening Crisis of Capitalism*, Monthly Review Press.)

Harry Magdoff is co-editor of Monthly Review.



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For the sake of this discussion, however, let us assume that productivity has slowed down, since Bowles et al. maintain that this "lies at the heart of the U.S. economic crisis." Why is a diminishing productivity rate so crucial? Because "when productivity growth declines, the struggle over the distribution of a more slowly growing economic pie intensifies"; hence, inflationary pressures and restrictive government policies. In other words, if productivity had risen more rapidly we would have had more production, and smoother economic seas.

I find it hard to follow this reasoning. Consider what greater productivity in the service industries would contribute to an enlarging economic pie. Thirty-five percent of all nongovernment employment is in trade, finance, insurance, real estate and other business services (such as advertising, accounting and law). What would an increase in productivity in these areas bring about? More insurance policies? More bank loans? More McDonald's outlets? More supermarkets? More lawsuits? More tax shelters? We would, of course, benefit from an expansion of some services, notably health-care services: more clinics in low-income neighborhoods, doctors who have enough time to concentrate on preventive medicine and no-longer-harassed nurses who can give tender loving care. But for all that, less rather than more productivity is what society needs.

I imagine that what my friends have in mind is greater output via enhanced productivity in the goods sectors: agriculture, mining, construction and manufacturing. In the case of agriculture, though, the problem from the standpoint of the market economy—rather than from the standpoint of what people here and abroad need—is that too much is already being produced, so much so that even the Reagan Administration is doling out free cheese and butter and selling wheat to those horrible Russians. Increased agricultural output would merely intensify the search for export markets and the pressure from farmers for higher subsidies. Greater productivity in mining would not necessarily result in more output, for here the limits—i.e., the accessibility of the ores and the crude oil—are often imposed by nature. And, for sure, the volume of construction is not being held back by poor productivity; rather, the constraints involve speculation in real estate and high interest rates.

We come finally to manufacturing. Studies have shown that although increasing productivity is a persistent feature in the history of capitalism, the rate of increase fluctuates from one period to another. The only consistency in these fluctuations is that productivity goes up faster when production accelerates. If these two variables are indeed correlated, we must ask which is cause and which effect. The most rapid rise in manufacturing activity during this century, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research, took place in the 1920s; it was followed by a much slower rate of growth during the 1930s. Did the decline in productivity cause or contribute to the Depression? Would the Depression have been milder if productivity had gone up faster? Or did the slowdown occur because of the Depression?

These are not idle questions for the purposes of the present discussion. To the extent that we can rely on the official indexes of productivity, they tell us that a sizable decline in the rate of increase in manufacturing productivity occurred between 1973 and 1980 in Japan, France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Britain and Sweden, as well as in the United States (*Monthly Labor Review*, December 1981). There was another common phenomenon in each of these countries: the growth of manufacturing output slowed perceptibly after 1973, as compared with the 1950s and 1960s. What all these advanced capitalist nations have been experiencing since the 1960s is the spread of stagnation. The forces that supported the long wave of post-World War II prosperity have petered out, and overaccumulation of capital has set in. In view of the major changes that have taken place throughout the advanced capitalist world since the 1960s, including the explosion of debt and speculation, it is strange to see U.S. capitalism's troubles attributed to a slowdown in productivity.

Nor is there a sound reason to assume that a faster productivity rise during the 1970s would have resulted in a larger economic pie because of more manufacturing output. On average, almost 18 percent of manufacturing capacity was idle between 1973 and 1979. In addition, there were plenty of idle workers around during those years. Manufacturing output would surely have been larger if businesspeople could have made profits by increasing production. And there is no point in blaming the competition of imports for the stagnation of production, since the output lost as a result of competitive imports is by and large offset by gains from exports.

What this all adds up to is that what strangles the economy, keeps the economic pie from growing and diverts energies from useful to wasteful activities—both here and abroad—is the nature of the profit system itself. If anything, changes in the rate of productivity growth are a byproduct of the way the profit system operates, certainly not a cause of capitalism's failures. □

Third Way

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

one must be matched by the other. This is the inner dynamic of the cold war which determines that its military and security establishments are *self-reproducing*. Their missiles summon forward our missiles which summon forward their missiles in turn. NATO's hawks feed the hawks of the Warsaw Pact countries.

For the ideology of the cold war is self-reproducing also.

E. P. Thompson, a social historian and writer, is on the coordinating committee of European Nuclear Disarmament. He is the author of The Making of the English Working Class *(Pantheon),* William Morris *(Pantheon) and* The Poverty of Theory *(Monthly Review Press) and is an editor of* Protest and Survive *(Monthly Review Press). This essay is excerpted from* Beyond the Cold War: A New Approach to the Arms Race and Nuclear Annihilation, *which will be published by Pantheon in September.* *© 1982, E. P. Thompson.*

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That is, the military and the security services and their political servants *need* the cold war. They have a direct interest in its continuance.

Yet a contradiction has arisen. Today's military confrontation has been protracted long after the reasons for it have vanished into history. I share the view of an editorial in *The Times* of London (October 2, 1981):

> The huge accumulations of weaponry which the two [superpowers] brandish at each other are wholly out of proportion to any genuine conflict of interests. There is no serious competition for essential resources, or for territory that is truly vital to the security of either, and the ideological fires have dwindled on both sides. In strictly objective terms a reasonable degree of accommodation should be easily attainable.

If the cold war is at once obsolete and inexorable—an ongoing, self-reproducing road show that has become necessary to ruling groups on both sides—can we find, within that contradiction, any resolution short of war?

Perhaps we can. But the resolution will not be easy. A general revolt of reason and conscience against the instruments which immediately threaten us—a perception, informing multitudes, of the human ecological imperative—this is a necessary part of the answer. Such a revolt, such a shift in perception, is already growing across Europe. But this cannot be the whole answer. For if the cold war has acquired a self-generating dynamic, then as soon as public concern is quieted by a few measures of arms control, new dangers and new weapons will appear. We must do more than protest if we are to survive. We must go behind the missiles to the cold war itself. We must begin to put Europe back into one piece.

And how could that be done? Very certainly it cannot be done by the victory of one side over the other. That would mean war. We must retrace our steps to that moment in 1944 before glaciation set in, and look once again for a third way.

If I had said this two years ago I would have despaired of holding your attention. But something remarkable is stirring in this continent today: movements which commenced in fear and which are now taking on the shape of hope; movements which cannot yet, with clarity, name their own demands. For the first time since the wartime Resistance there is a spirit abroad in Europe which carries a transcontinental aspiration. The Other which menaces us is being redefined not as other nations, nor even as the other bloc, but as the forces leading both blocs to auto-destruction—not Russia or America but their military, ideological and security establishments and their ritual oppositions.

And at the same time, as this Other is excluded, so a new kind of internal bonding is taking place. This takes the form of a growing commitment, by many thousands, to the imperative of survival and against the ideological or security imperatives of either bloc or their nation-states. In the words of the Appeal for European Nuclear Disarmament of April 1980:

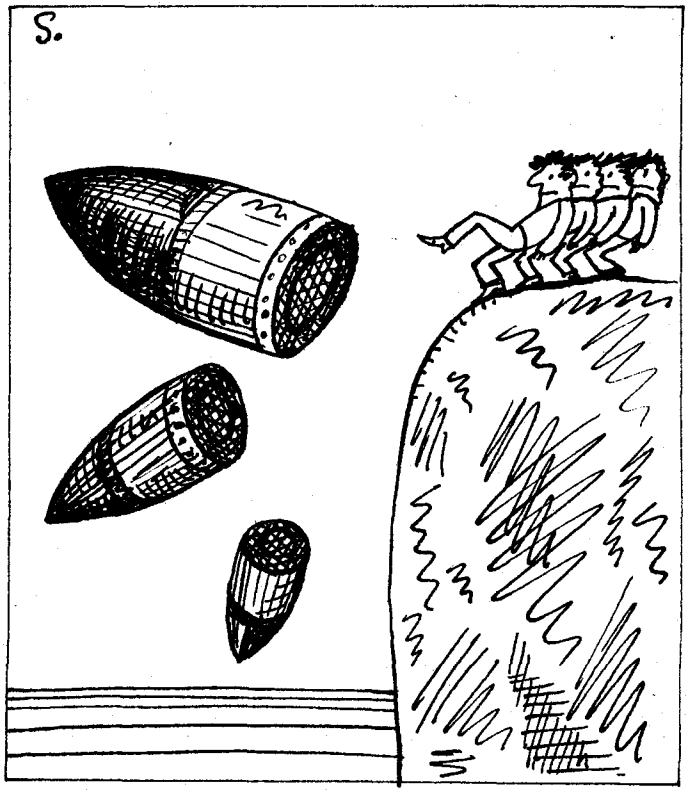
> We must commence to act as if a united, neutral and pacific Europe already exists. We must learn to be loyal, not to "East" or "West," but to each other.

This is a large and improbable expectation. It has often been proclaimed in the past, and it has been as often disappointed. Yet what is improbable has already, in the past year, begun to happen. The military structures are under challenge. But something is happening of far greater significance. The ideological structures are under challenge also, and from *both* sides.

The cold war placed the political culture of Europe in a permanent double bind: the cause of "peace" and the cause of "freedom" fell apart. What is now happening is that these two causes are returning to one cause—peace *and* freedom—and as this happens, so, by a hundred different channels, the transcontinental discourse of political culture can be resumed.

The peace movements which have developed with such astonishing rapidity in Northern, Western and Southern Europe—and which are now finding an echo in the East—are one part of this cause. They have arisen in response not only to a military and strategic situation but to a political situation also. What has aroused Europeans most about the deployment of weapons whose target would be the "theater" of Europe is the spectacle of two superpowers arguing above the heads of the people who live there. These movements speak with new accents. They are, in most cases, neither pro-Soviet nor manipulated by the Communist-influenced World Peace Council. Their objective is to clear nuclear weapons and bases out of the whole continent, East and West, and then to roll back conventional forces. Nor is it correct to describe them as "neutralist" or "pacifist." They are looking for a third way. A third way is an active way: it is not "neutral" between the other ways, it goes somewhere else.

The Western peace movements bring together tradi-



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tions—socialist, trade unionist, liberal, Christian, ecological—which have always been committed to civil rights. They extend their support to the Polish renewal and to Solidarity, and to movements of libertarian dissent in the Warsaw Pact countries. And from Eastern Europe also, voice after voice is now reaching us—hesitant, cautious, but with growing confidence—searching for the same alliance: peace *and* freedom.

These voices signal that the whole thirty-five-year-old era of the cold war could be coming to an end: the Ice Age could give way to turbulent torrents running from East to West and from West to East. And within the peace movements, and also within movements of lower profile but of equal potential in Eastern Europe, there is maturing a further—and a convergent—demand: to shake off the hegemony of the superpowers and to reclaim autonomy.

The question before Europeans today is not how many NATO forward-based systems might equal how many Soviet SS-20s. Beneath these equations there is a larger question: in what circumstances might *both* superpowers loosen the military grip which settled upon Europe in 1946 and which has been protracted long after its origins have receded into history? And how might such a retreat of hegemonies and loosening of blocs take place without endangering peace? Such an outcome would be profoundly in the interests not only of the peoples of Europe but of the peoples of the Soviet Union and the United States—in relaxing tension and in relieving them of some of the burdens and dangers of their opposed military establishments. But what—unless it were to be our old enemy "deterrence"—could monitor such a transition so that neither one nor the other nation turned it to advantage?

We are not, it should be said, describing some novel stage in the progress known as détente. For in the early 1970s, détente signified the cautious tuning-down of hostilities between states or blocs, but without altering the cold war status quo. Détente (or "peaceful coexistence") was licensed by the superpowers; it did not arise from the client states, still less from popular movements. The framework of East-West settlement was held rigid by deterrence: in the high noon of Kissinger's diplomacy, détente was a horse trade between the leaders of the blocs, in which any unseemly movement out of the framework was to be discouraged as "destabilizing." Czechs or Italians were required to remain quiet in their client places, lest any rash movement should disturb the tetchy equilibrium of the superpowers.

But what we can glimpse now is something different: a détente of peoples rather than of states—a movement of peoples which sometimes dislodges states from their blocs and brings them into a new diplomacy of conciliation, which sometimes runs beneath state structures, and which sometimes defies the ideological and security structures of particular states. This will be a more fluid, unregulated, unpredictable movement than in the past. It may entail risk.

The risk must be taken. For the cold war can be brought to an end in only two ways: by the destruction of European civilization, or by the reunification of European politica culture. The first will take place if the ruling groups in th rival superpowers, sensing that the ground is shiftin beneath them and that their client states are becomin detached, succeed in compensating for their waning politica and economic authority by engaging in a more and mor frenzied militarization. This is exactly what is happenin now. The outcome will be terminal.

But we can now see a small opening toward the other al ternative. And if we think this alternative to be possible then we should—every one of us—reorder all our priorities We should invest nothing more in missiles, everything in th skills of communication and exchange. All I can do here i indicate, briefly, programs which are already in the making

One such program is that of limited nuclear-free zones. A Nordic nuclear-free zone is now under active consideration And in southeast Europe, the Greek government has pledge to initiate discussions with Bulgaria and Rumania in th Warsaw Pact, and with nonaligned Yugoslavia, for anothe nuclear-free zone.

Such zones have political significance. Both states an local authorities can enlarge the notion to include exchange between citizens in direct, uncensored discourse. In Centra Europe a zone of this kind might also take in measures o conventional disarmament and the withdrawal of bot Soviet and NATO forces from both Germanys. This pro posal is now being actively propagated in East Germany a well as in West—the late East German civil rights supporte Robert Havemann raised the question directly in an oper letter to Chairman Brezhnev—and it is now being discussed in unofficial circles, in Poland and Czechoslovakia too.

The objectives of such larger zones are clear: to make a space of lessened tension between the two blocs; to destroy the menacing, symbolic affront of nuclear weapons; to bring nations both East and West within reciprocal agreements; and to loosen the bonds of the bloc system, allowing more autonomy, more initiative to the smaller states.

But at the same time there must be other initiatives, through a hundred different channels, by which citizens might enlarge this discourse. It is absurd to expect the weapons systems of both sides to de-weaponize themselves, the security systems of both sides to fall into each other's arms. It is, precisely, at the top of the cold war systems that deadlock, or worse, takes place. If we are to destructure the cold war, then we must destabilize these systems from below.

I am talking of a new kind of politics which cannot (with however much good will) be conducted by politicians. It must be a politics of peace, informed by a new internationalist code of honor, conducted by citizens. And it is now being so conducted by the international medical profession, by churches, by writers and by many others.

Music can be a "politics" of this kind. There is today some generational cultural mutation taking place among the young people of Europe. The demonstrations for peace—in Bonn, London, Madrid, Rome, Amsterdam—have been thronged with the young. The young are *bored* with the cold war. There is a shift at a level below politics—expressed in style, in sound, in symbol, in dress—which could be more

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significant than any negotiations taking place in Geneva. The PA systems of popular music bands are already capable of making transcontinental sounds. The bands may not be expert arms negotiators, but they might blast the youth of Europe into each others' arms.

It has been proposed that there might be a festival—it might be called "Theater of Peace"—somewhere in Central Europe in the summer of 1983. Young people (although their elders would not be excluded) would be called to assemble from every part of the continent, bringing with them their music, their living theater, their art, their posters, their symbols and gifts. There would be rallies, workshops and informal discussions. Every effort would be made to invite youth from "the other side," not in preselected official parties but as individual visitors and strays. The project may be too ambitious for 1982; but as a primer for this, plans are now afoot for a popular music festival in Vienna early in August.

In conclusion, how do we put the causes of freedom and of peace back together? This cannot be done by provocative interventions in the affairs of other nations. And it certainly cannot be done by the old strategy of cold war "linkage." If we look forward to democratic renewal on the other side of our common world, then this strategy is plainly counterproductive. No popular movements in the East will ever obtain civil or trade union rights because the West is pressing missiles against their country's borders. On the contrary, this only enhances the security operations and the security-minded ideology of their rulers. The peoples of the East will seek their rights and liberties themselves and in their own way—as the Portuguese, Spanish, Greek and Polish people have shown us. What is needed, from and for all of us, is a space free from cold war crisis in which we can move.

There might, however, be a very different kind of citizens' linkage in which, as part of the people's détente, the movements for peace in the West and for freedom in the East recognized each other as natural allies. For this to be possible, we in the West must move first. As the military pressure upon the East begins to relax, so the old double bind will begin to lose its force. And the Western peace movement (which can scarcely be cast convincingly as an "agent of Western imperialism" by Soviet ideologists) should press steadily upon the state structures of the East demands for greater openness of exchange, both of persons and of ideas.

A transcontinental discourse must begin to flow, in both directions, with the peace movement—a movement of unofficial people with a code of conduct which disallows the pursuit of political advantage for either side—as the constituit. We cannot be content to criticize nuclear missiles. We have to be, in every moment, critics also of the adversary posture of the powers. For we are threatened not only by weapons but by the ideological and security structures which divide our continent and which turn us into adversaries. Thus the concession which the peace movement asks of the Soviet state is not so much these SS-20s and those Backfire bombers but its assistance in commencing to tear these structures down. And in good time one might look forward to a further change in the Soviet Union itself, as the long-outworn ideology and structures inherited from Stalin's time give way before internal pressures for a Soviet renewal.

What I have proposed is improbable. But, if it commenced, it might gather pace with astonishing rapidity. There would not be decades of détente, as the glaciers slowly melt. There would be very rapid and unpredictable changes: nations would become unglued from their alliances; there would be sharp conflicts within nations; there would be successive risks. We could roll up the map of the cold war and travel without maps for a while.

I do not mean that Russia would become a Western democracy, nor that the West would go communist. Immense differences in social systems would remain. Nations, if unglued from their alliances, might—as Poland and Greece have shown us—fall back into their own inherited national traditions. I mean only that the flow of political and intellectual discourse, and of human exchange, would resume across the whole continent. The blocs would discover that they had forgotten what their adversary postures were about.

Our species has been favored on this planet, although we have not always been good caretakers of our globe's resources. Our stay here, in the spaces of geological time, has been brief. No one can tell us our business. But I think it is something more than to consume as much as we can and then blow the place up.

We have, if not a duty, then a need, deeply engraved within our culture, to pass the place on no worse than we found it. Those of us who do not expect an afterlife may see in this our only immortality: to pass on the succession of life, the succession of culture. It may even be that we are happier when we are engaged in matters larger than our own wants, larger than ourselves.

We did not choose to live in this time. But there is no way of getting out of it. And it has given us as significant a cause as has ever been known, a moment of opportunity which might never be renewed. If these weapons and then those weapons are added to the huge sum on our continent, if Poland drifts into civil war and if this calls down Soviet military intervention, if the United States launches some military adventure in the Middle East—can we be certain that this moment will ever come back? I do not think so. If my analysis is right, then the inertial thrust of the cold war, from its formidable military and ideological bases, will have passed the point of no return.

The opportunity is *now*, when there is already an enhanced consciousness of danger informing millions. We can match this crisis only by a summoning of resources to a height like that attained by the greatest religious or political movements of Europe's past. I think, once again, of 1944 and of the crest of the Resistance. There must be that kind of spirit abroad in Europe once more. But this time it must arise, not in the wake of war and repression but before these take place. Five minutes afterward, and it will be too late. Humankind must at last grow up. We must recognize the Other in ourselves. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Still Taking Their Stand

JACKSON LEARS

A BAND OF PROPHETS: The Vanderbilt Agrarians After Fifty Years. *Edited by William C. Havard and Walter Sullivan. Louisiana State University Press. 190 pp. $12.95.*

Here, in the middle of a plowed field, is a huge hand holding a fountain pen. The pen is about to inscribe something in one of the furrows. Near the hand and pen, dwarfed by them, stands a farmer leaning on a rake. He looks unimpressed.

It is a strange drawing for the dust jacket of *A Band of Prophets*, a book which celebrates the achievements of the Vanderbilt Agrarians, those twelve Southerners (including the poets Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, Robert Penn Warren and Donald Davidson, and the drama critic Stark Young) who defended the mores of their rural region against the corrosive impact of industrialism. Strange, because the image of the pen overshadowing the farmer embodies the most familiar attack on the Agrarians.

The criticism went something like this: the Agrarians were effete literati who didn't know that farm life was solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. So they romanticized life on the land as an antidote to the maladies of modern industrial society. Even while they enjoyed a mobile, cosmopolitan existence, they exalted the provincial rootedness, the leisurely rhythms, the pastoral simplicity of preindustrial times. They did not realize that they couldn't have it both ways, that to enjoy freedom they had to give up traditional stability, and that in any case, history was marching inevitably toward further industrialization. Failing to appreciate the democratization of leisure and comfort brought by technological advance, the Agrarians fell victim to fantastic visions of moonlight and magnolias in the Old South. They were reactionary cranks. So, at least, we have been told—particularly by liberals and radicals—ever since the Agrarians published *I'll Take My Stand* in 1930.

Despite derision, the Agrarian critique has stubbornly survived. *A Band of Prophets* aims to redress the critical balance, to emphasize the farsightedness of the Agrarians' views. The book is the result of a conference held at Vanderbilt University to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of *I'll Take My Stand*. It contains six essays and the edited transcript of a panel discussion among the three surviving Agrarians (Warren, the psychologist Lyle Lanier, the novelist Andrew Lytle) conducted by a fellow traveler, the critic Cleanth Brooks. As the title suggests, the editors and contributors agree that the Agrarians were prophetic: their voices, crying out in the wilderness a half-century ago, anticipated the critique of industrial society that appeared in the 1960s. Far from rendering *I'll Take My Stand* obsolete, Brooks asserts, developments in the recent past "have actually sharpened the issues raised by that book."

A Band of Prophets is uneven. The essays vary in quality, ranging from John Shelton Reed's lucid analysis of the Agrarians as cultural nationalists to Lewis Simpson's oracular pronouncements on "the Southern Republic of Letters." The transcribed panel discussion is hilarious, provocative and irritating. Lanier is the most eager to connect Agrarian concerns to programmatic solutions to contemporary problems—efforts to preserve depleted resources, to decentralize the energy industries or to revive the self-sufficient farm; Lytle reminisces about the good old days at Vanderbilt, when there was only one campus cop; Warren rambles entertainingly from strictures on Whitman's vision of "mass man" to a tale of hippie "agrarians" in Vermont who refused to clean up the dog turds in their yard because "that's nature." Everyone has a good time, and nothing much is concluded.

The best thing about *A Band of Prophets* is that it sent me back to *I'll Take My Stand*, which is also uneven but which remains a remarkable book. There is a great deal in it to confirm its critics' harshest judgments; there is also a great deal that is fresh, courageous and well worth pondering. It blends narrowness and broadness of spirit.

The narrowness is immediately apparent. One obvious difficulty is that the authors were virtually silent on the subject of race. (Though when they did address it, as Warren did in "The Briar Patch," their paternalism differed little from that of most New Deal liberals. And in varying degrees, in various essays, one can find elitist disdain for "the masses," slavish Anglophilia and neo-Confederate ravings about the unique virtues of the South. To be sure this Southern emphasis grounded the Agrarians' critique, made it more than the abstract maunderings of threatened humanists in a world of machines. But the Southernism seems dated. Contrary to some assertions in *A Band of Prophets*, the South has not remained resistant to the disintegrative effects of modernization. While there are still many traditional backwaters, the dominant class of Southerners is unsurpassed in its enthusiasm for capitalist development and Republican Party politics. The polyester jet set is suckling at the corporate sow, while blacks and less affluent whites are still scrambling for the hind teat. The South's "agrarian tradition" has not weathered well in Sun Belt suburbs.

What *has* weathered well is the Agrarian indictment of industrial "progress," whether under corporate capitalist or bureaucratic socialist regimes. The Agrarians were by no means simple-minded back-to-the-landers, like Warren's hippie homesteaders; nor were they merely unreconstructed Southerners. They were acute observers and critics of everyday life under industrial capitalism, far more acute than their Marxist contemporaries in the 1930s. Take, for example, the Agrarians' comments on work and leisure. According to their "statement of principles," the modern worker's "labor is hard, its tempo is fierce, and his employment is insecure. The first principle of a good labor is that it must be effective, but the second principle is that it must be enjoyed. Labor is one of the largest items in the human career; it is a modest demand that it may partake of happiness." And "turning to consumption, as the grand end which justifies the evil of modern labor, we find that we have been deceived. We have

Jackson Lears is the author of No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of Modern American Culture, 1880-1920 *(Pantheon).*

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more time in which to consume, and many more products to be consumed. But the tempo of our labors communicates itself to our satisfactions, and these also become brutal and hurried."

If the Agrarians grasped the affinities between work and leisure in the modern world, they also understood the intimate connections between material life and mental life. "Religion," they wrote,

> can hardly be expected to flourish in an industrial society. Religion is our submission to the general intention of a nature that is fairly inscrutable; it is the sense of our role as creatures within it. But nature industrialized . . . manufactured into commodities, is no longer nature but a highly simplified picture of nature. We receive the illusion of having power over nature, and lose the sense of nature as something mysterious and contingent.

It is possible to dismiss this as sentimentality; it is also possible to see it as a remarkably concise summary of the effects of bureaucratic "rationality" on human beings' sense of cosmic order—a description of the process Max Weber called "the disenchantment of the world."

The problem with the Agrarians was that whenever they sought a pre-bureaucratic alternative, they turned to the Old South, grossly distorting the actual conditions of life in what was, after all, a slave society growing cash crops for an international market economy. The Agrarians' Old South was a society that never existed. But as Louis Rubin points out in his introduction to the Louisiana State University Press edition of *I'll Take My Stand*, "it was a society that *should* have existed—one in which men could live as individuals and not as automatons, aware of their finiteness and their dependence on God and nature, devoted to the enhancement of the moral life in its aesthetic and spiritual dimensions, possessed of a sense of the deep inscrutability of the natural world." It was, in other words, a preindustrial utopia. The Agrarians' utopianism, their refusal to acquiesce in the "inevitable" process of industrialization, was in the end their greatest strength. It energized and broadened their critique, allying them with antimodern critics from John Ruskin and William Morris to Lewis Mumford.

Until recently, this antimodern tradition has received little attention in cultural debate. A naïve faith in progress has charmed socialist dissenters as well as capitalist apologists. If progress has been General Electric's most important product, it has also been the philosopher's stone of left ideologues, for whom "progressive" is still an honorific term. Few thinkers at any point on the political spectrum have wanted to appear nostalgic about preindustrial communities that (they assumed) were squalid and oppressive. Left thinkers in particular have viewed such traditional values as family loyalty, local attachment and religious faith as barriers to revolutionary class consciousness and personal fulfillment. And even if they felt that power and wealth needed radical redistribution, few have questioned the cult of productivity and material progress.

But during the last two decades, the stale atmosphere of "progressive" thought has started to freshen. Historians on the left, led by E. P. Thompson, Herbert Gutman and Lawrence Goodwyn, have begun to show that preindustrial cultures were far more complex and fluid, more tolerant of idiosyncratic behavior, sometimes even more democratic, than had been supposed. Other left thinkers have attacked the common assumption that modernization has enhanced personal autonomy. No matter who owns the means of production, they note, the modern obsession with industrial productivity has usually promoted hierarchy rather than democracy in the workplace; and immersion in bureaucratic routine is hardly a liberation.

One can find these insights among thinkers as diverse as Raymond Williams, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Sheldon Wolin, Herbert Marcuse, Ivan Illich, Christopher Lasch and Michel Foucault. All grasp the central irony of contemporary cultural debate: that corporate capitalists are the chief enemies of the traditional values they claim to defend. In the writings of these thinkers, one can sense a dawning realization that loyalties to family, community or faith are not mere relics of an Age of Superstition; they can provide important resources for resisting the atomizing effects of ceaseless "growth."

The left seems finally to be learning from the antimodern tradition. As Brooks points out in *A Band of Prophets*, much of Lasch's argument in *The Culture of Narcissism* sounds remarkably like the Agrarians' statement of principles. This is not merely a matter of intellectual fashion; discontent with

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industrial capitalism pervades popular sentiment as well. The desire to protect land and neighborhoods from the ravages of mindless development, the growing disillusionment with centralized bureaucratic authority, the revival of religious enthusiasm manipulable by demagogues but rooted in longings for a larger sense of purpose than technocratic culture provides—all these suggest the ideological bankruptcy of corporate liberalism and renewed possibilities for the left.

A problem remains. While the renewed appreciation of preindustrial cultures has ventilated thinking on the left, antimodern impulses threaten in some quarters to become as reflexive as the old "progressive" orthodoxy. The reflex is not Ludditism: no one has suggested that we give up our washing machines or typewriters, and no one (not even the most fervent Agrarian) has argued that there is anything ennobling about spending sixteen hours a day looking at the wrong end of a horse. The danger is, rather, that the quest for community will blind dissenters to such preindustrial failings as xenophobia or patriarchal domination, and to the freedom offered by certain varieties of urban life.

Some left historians, for example, have idealized rural or immigrant communities they would no doubt find suffocating to inhabit. Lytle underscores this difficulty when he speaks of the importance of family continuity: "You've got to have that old grandmother in the back room saying, 'Have your tongue pulled out before you lie,' don't you see?" Yes, I do see, and I admire that old woman, but something makes me want to say the hell with her hectoring moralism. Ancestral ties and customs can be burdensome as well as sustaining, especially now that so few people can accept tradition un-selfconsciously. As the Agrarians came to realize, a self-conscious recovery of tradition must always be contradictory and incomplete.

So it makes sense to try to have it both ways. There is no longer cause to genuflect at the altar of progress; there is nothing inevitable about the spread of centralized bureaucracy or unrestrained industrial development. The choice is not between rigid models of tradition and modernity; it is between stale "progressive" formulas and a more flexible critique of industrial capitalism. The point is not to deify the preindustrial past but to imagine a culture diverse enough to contain individual freedom and mutual obligation, craziness and constraint—the *flâneur* on the boulevard and the grandmother in the back room. □

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Didn't She O.D.?

ANNA SHAPIRO

EDIE: An American Biography. *By Jean Stein. Edited with George Plimpton. Alfred A. Knopf. 455 pp. $16.95.*

Andy Warhol wanted everybody to be famous for fifteen minutes; for something like fifteen minutes, Edie Sedgwick was. If she is remembered at all—"Didn't she O.D.?"—it is usually as just a name, as "a Warhol person," as the skinny girl with the well-bred voice in a few underground films. Those who knew her speak of her as a creature of incredible charm. Readers of this patchwork of interviews and documents may find themselves wondering why.

Edie is a familiar type to almost anyone who prepped in the 1960s. We all knew Edies, and in the 1970s may have visited them when they landed in mental institutions—Riggs or Bellevue or Silver Hill, Edie's first hospital home. Wherever she was, Edie took the most direct route to stardom. At boarding school in 1958 it was basketball: "She was *so* high on making the team . . . we all wanted to be her best friend." High and sought after—everything Edie would ever want to be. In her sophomore year she left school to spend time at home gorging and vomiting (these were the days before anorexia and bulimia were household words) and riding her horses. By winter term at her new school, "All the people who'd thought she was so cute and bright were really sick of her." It was a pattern that was to be repeated.

In the fall of 1963 she "swept into Cambridge . . . to study art." Her true career lay in attracting men, though, men who felt elevated by her presence and who in turn elevated her: "People were willing to let Edie be a star." These people were stars themselves—"the very nitroglycerine queens, the really smart ones"—men, witty, often brilliant, homosexual, first from Harvard and then from the coterie that drifted in the stardust around Warhol and his Factory. Edie treated them lavishly—she spent $80,000 in six months in New York. There were dinner parties at The Ginger Man, a gay male "French maid" and limousines, always limousines. (When her money manager tried to teach her how to take a bus, she got off after two blocks to call a limo.) Her props form a catalogue of what was "U" in the 1960s—a far cry from today's yogurt and jogging. Her favorite song, her theme song, was Richard Rodgers's "Loads of Love": "I just want money, and then some money, and loads of lovely love." She had lots of money, men of both sexes and loads of lovely drugs.

Edie had two surrogate fathers in New York, Warhol and the famous Dr. Roberts. When Edie was a child she was made to take Vitamin B shots. "They *hurt*! We got them every day. *Every* day." Dr. Roberts called them vitamin shots, too. The really "in" people got them three or four times a day. The shots were laced with cocaine, heroin, LSD or speed: "I blossomed into a healthy young drug addict," Edie said. No need to throw up anymore to keep those pounds off. The shots were about $25 a hit, and Dr. Roberts sometimes threw in sex, for free.

The frequent analogy between love and drugs is not casually made: they induce the same craving and dependence. When Edie first, almost accidentally,

Anna Shapiro's reviews have appeared in Saturday Review *and* The Soho News.

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stepped before Warhol's camera, she became "the girl on fire." She dyed her hair silver to match Warhol's, starred in his films and was seen with him everywhere. Although drugs and the adulation that went along with being Warhol's girl were to prove headier addictions than she could handle, they were, at first, perfect substitutes for the daddylove that was what Edie craved. For above all Edie's story is about Bad Dad, and her biography is the *Daddy Dearest* of WASPland.

One of Edie's brothers hanged himself; another crashed his motorcycle into a bus. As one friend remarks, "Of course, growing up around Boston, everybody's slightly mad. Old families have strange people in the attic." Francis Sedgwick is as familiar a strange person as Edie—in fact, he was just the type who always seems to be father to such girls.

The Sedgwicks were one of those families in which, despite (or because of) all the money and position, the men were expected to go out and Achieve. After failing to be a football star like his brother or a superb scholar like his father, Francis decided to become a business tycoon. He made a good start, but collapsed one day at the office. Though the collapse was physical, he was diagnosed as a manic-depressive psychotic and was warned that "there is an increased risk of instability in the descendants." His response was to marry immediately and father more children than any of his set thought entirely decent.

Deprived of business, Francis concentrated on art, commuting from Cold Spring Harbor with the real tycoons to a sculpture studio in Manhattan. On the ranches in Santa Barbara to which he later removed his family, he went about half-naked to display his sculptor's (and football player's) muscles. By all accounts gorgeous, he exercised his seductive charms on the local gentry and on his teen-age daughters, too.

Edie was obsessed with him, and it is likely he made passes at her. She caught him in bed with one of his many mistresses. No wonder she gravitated to "nitroglycerine queens." She was everything they wanted to be, everything ultra-feminine—vague, helpless, "Oh, I *had* to have all the new colors of the Rubenstein line"—and no competition in the areas of wit or sex. It was the perfect marriage. But, as with all addicts, she needed a bigger and bigger

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fix—and Warhol gave her less and less.

Or so we are to see it. The book is arranged chronologically, starting with the New England background and moving on to Edie's considerable family, the demise of her two brothers and her dubious rise and fall; there are bulky chapters on Pop Art and on Warhol and his obscure origins. Except for a few documents—clips from *Vogue*, some sentences from family memoirs, a poem by Patti Smith—*Edie* consists entirely of transcriptions, artfully cut up and arranged, of testimony from a plethora of speakers, from Norman Mailer to Paul America, from Barbara Rose to Cherry Vanilla. There is a plethora of photographs, too: family snapshots, fashion and society shots, movie stills.

With our love of technology and "fact," the interview may be a peculiarly American form, and *Edie*, as its subtitle suggests, a peculiarly American kind of biography, a reliquary of documents. But it is all hearsay, really. By contrast with the presentations in Warhol's *Interview* magazine, the transcripts are not given whole; one has no sense of what questions prompted the words. And by contrast with the carefully introduced interviews in George Plimpton's *The Paris Review*, speakers are identified only by frequently glib and silly self-descriptions at the end of the book ("Edie and I were amico. In the Sixties I was a lighting designer and photographer. . . . I lived like a comet, and since the Sixties have been doing the planetary canon"). The book cries out for a preface or an author's note. But is there an author? Is Jean Stein the interviewer? Her own testimony appears: did she dutifully sit down and speak into her machine? The material has been elegantly cut and pasted, but was any of it checked? And what about the ellipses that occasionally dot a chunk of transcript? Surely more than they indicate was left out. One wonders, too, about the speakers whose contributions did not fit the design, and the "witnesses"—Edie's mother, for instance—who wouldn't testify at all. *Edie* may be zippy narrative, but it is irresponsible biography.

The interview technique does provide us with colorful characters, and with words I cherished, like "sandless" ("no guts") and "poppy" (as in pop music, popular and Pappagallo). But why do we need this biography of a pathetic girl with a neurotic eating disorder and unquenchable vanity (she had silicone added to her breasts shortly before her death)? The adjectives most often applied to Edie are "fabulous" and "beautiful," but the pictures show someone merely pretty, in a way endemic to her class and gene pool—though drugs, disconnecting one from ordinary concerns as they do, can engender a kind of synthetic spirituality that might conceivably seem "fabulous." Edie emerges as such a slight personality, one closes the book suspecting that a collection of data from *anyone's* friends and family would make as readable and novelistic a package. Edie's family was exceptional, though, and her friends and associates were stars. Eavesdropping on Viva and Truman Capote is fun, so the experience of reading this biography is like reading a magazine—*Interview* or *The Paris Review* indeed.

Despite its subtitle, *Edie* is much more a portrait of social class than of anything peculiarly American. The Sedgwick nicknames (Babbo, Fuzzy, Saucie) remind one of Proust's royal Gri-gris and Quious, and *arrivistes* have always courted aristocracy ("Edie legitimized [Warhol]. . . . He'd be the first to admit it"). Edie's entire world was innocent of politics. Her father came out with lines like "The Negro is first cousin to the monkey, and that is a *fact*," while one of her Cambridge friends said of Alger Hiss, "We knew he was famous, but we didn't know why." It is proof that much of what we think of as "the Sixties" was a matter of style.

The word "tragic" will be piously uttered in reference to this life, but Edie Sedgwick emerges as a sad, sad little footnote to the lives of her fathers. Unlike Francis, who wanted to create something lasting and unchanging, or Warhol, who cultivated the ephemeral, Edie couldn't make art of her own life, as one is only too poignantly reminded by her performance as Lulu, her final role, for the film interludes in Alban Berg's opera. Yet she has been a surprisingly durable product, thanks to that miraculous preservative, death. (She died in 1971, at 28, in her sleep; suffocation was given as the immediate cause.) There has already been a docudrama about her, aired last year on public television, and now there is this book. Those fifteen minutes of limelight are preserved like a bug in amber. And yet it may be her Svengali who has the last word: at one point, Warhol whispered to Jean Stein, "I don't remember anything about her." □

Art as Ideas, Ideas as Art

JOHN PERREAULT

AMERICAN ART SINCE 1945. *By Dore Ashton. Oxford University Press. 224 pp. $25.*

Someone walking off the street into a serious gallery of contemporary art, whether a commercial shop or an artist-run co-op or a publicly funded alternative space, would most likely be appalled or disoriented. He or she might stumble upon piles of dirt, be thwarted by a neon maze, mistake the sculpture for pedestals awaiting their statues, be asked to read convoluted texts or be insulted by paintings encrusted with broken dishes. How would our hypothetical visitor know that these were all art propositions, proposals for immortality, already quasi-validated by their very presence in a quasi-sanctified space? The experience would be like walking into a living room where a game of charades or, more aptly, chess was in progress and not knowing the rules of the game or even that a game was under way. The players' bizarre behavior might fascinate or repel. After repeated exposures and considerable deduction things might clear up; nevertheless, some key bits of information could have lessened the pain and speeded up cognition.

Isn't a good eye enough to understand contemporary art? Sensitivity to line, form and color counts for a great deal, and you either have it or you don't. But a good eye is not enough, for art is also about ideas. Ideas—sometimes silly, sometimes profound—generate art. Art in turn generates more ideas. Furthermore, whatever the artist's intentions, art is always ideological and contains a view of the world.

As an art critic I am often asked to recommend a book that will provide a readable but serious introduction to contemporary art. Until recently, there

John Perreault, a poet and an art critic, is a past president of the American section of the International Association of Art Critics.

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were none. When I teach contemporary art, I have had to make do with quizzical or misguided textbooks, supplemented by a bevy of single-subject paperbacks: one on Pop Art, one on Minimalism, one on Conceptual Art, one on Realism and so forth. The cost mounts, and the much-desired overall view recedes. Now, however, I can strongly recommend Dore Ashton's *American Art Since 1945*, hoping, since the $25 price is a bit much, that a paperback edition will be forthcoming.

Though Ashton has not achieved the fame of Clement Greenberg or the late Harold Rosenberg, she has had a distinguished career, notable for its loyalties to a number of artists who, given the power of the marketplace, might otherwise have been accorded short shrift. An art critic for *The New York Times* in the 1950s, she has contributed many articles to art magazines. This is her fifteenth book.

I cannot argue that *American Art Since 1945* is either a brilliant or a profound text. Brilliance and profundity are not always required. Brave new thoughts or intricate arguments, even unusual material or novel connections, would only get in the way of its introductory function. Still, compared with most of the surveys of contemporary art now available, it is full of insight. For instance, Ashton notes the continued relevance of the debate between the advocates of art for art's sake and the advocates of art as an expression of social commitment: "The questions raised in the 19th century on these two broad issues have been reiterated by each generation in the 20th century. Despite the vast diffusion of words and images in our century, and the increasingly efficient means of purveying them, the anxiety and disaffection of artists have not been dispelled, nor has the nature of their questions been substantially altered."

Ashton does slip up on occasion. I bridled at her use of the masculine third-person pronoun in her brief introduction—are not some cultural historians women?—and there are small errors here and there: Sol LeWitt's artworks involving schematic penciled or chalked lines applied directly to walls are properly referred to as wall drawings, *not* wall paintings. Otherwise, Ashton zips through Abstract Expressionism, Pop and Minimal Art without missing a beat.

Ashton is usually fair, and it is always clear when she is being critical or sarcastic—as in her discussion of Pop Art. I would have put more emphasis on feminist art and on the rise of alternative spaces (seeded by the National Endowment for the Arts and state arts councils) in the 1970s, but in general she does place art in a social and political context. About art in the 1970s, for instance, she observes, "Certainly the pressures, including the pressures of time in the face of revelations of future ecological disaster and the ever-growing stockpiles of nuclear bombs, had much to do with the growing trends toward circumstantial art on the one hand—the ephemeral events in public spaces—and art encompassed by some programmatic ideal, on the other." (She is no stranger to poetry, either, indicating connections between Beat poets and New York School poets and Abstract Expressionist artists, and recounting the latter-day dethronement of poetry as an art influence by ersatz philosophy.)

Ashton's last chapter contains astute warnings about the increased corporate influence on art. She is critical of the museums: "Because of the recession-inflation situation, they had been forced to accept the avuncular counsels and, above all, the subsidies of huge corporations. Despite the perils so often cited by thoughtful social critics, and even critics in the arts, museums in the '70s recklessly embarked on programs so ambitious that only American business could bail them out." She is also critical of the art-as-investment trend: "The interlocking elements of the new situation in the art world," she writes, "emerge in reports of increased corporate investment in painting and sculpture as a hedge against inflation, and a new interest on the part of individual buyers in the business value of art."

Though one must know a little about art to begin with—an acquaintance with Cubism and Surrealism is assumed—Ashton's survey does cover the ground of contemporary art. What makes her book so much better than others of its kind is that she manages to balance the sociological and the esthetic, deftly indicating their connection. Although most texts on contemporary art disregard the historical background, Ashton reminds us that there was indeed a cold war in the 1950s and social turmoil in the 1960s. Art *is* constantly in danger of being taken over by commercial publicity. Ashton lays out almost all the

David Harris recaptures the idealism of the 60's. Right up to the moment it was murdered on March 14, 1980.

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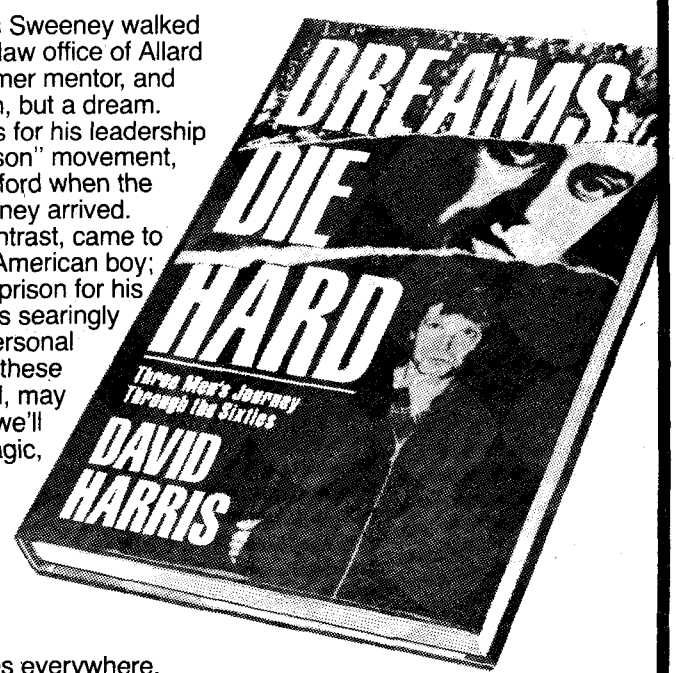

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issues in a calm and lucid way, never losing sight of artworks as artworks, or, for that matter, of artists as living, breathing human beings.

Ashton's *American Art Since 1945* is actually a moral chronicle. Style and shifts of style, within an artist's oeuvre or within a decade, are limned with efficiency and finesse. But Ashton sees art as a political as well as an esthetic activity. Without this dimension—which is at least partly a sense of social responsibility—art, no matter how clever, is just another product. Why have most other commentators and chroniclers and even art critics forgotten this? □

Kipling in One

BEN SONNENBERG

THE PORTABLE KIPLING. *Edited by Irving Howe. Viking/Penguin. 687 pp. $17.95. Paper $6.95.*

I once heard from one of his students that Irving Howe sometimes weeps while reading Kipling aloud. Whether or not the story is true, Howe's fine anthology presents an always spellbinding Kipling of tremendous emotional force.

Howe rightly stresses the stories. No English writer ever wrote more good short stories than Kipling. Howe gives eleven stories from the 1880s, when Kipling was in his 20s (though he omits "At the End of the Passage," which Henry James so admired), and six from the post-Boer War and post-World War I periods, including the wonderful but not famous "Friendly Brook," a story worthy of Chekhov.

Howe offers about fifty poems. He makes an enlightened selection, enough anyway to enable a sense, in readers brought up on the moderns, of what a true popular poet can be. Kipling was the last not connected somehow with show business.

Howe omits *Kim* and *Stalkey & Co.*; he gives only a taste of *The Jungle Books* and *Just So Stories*, perhaps because all, as Howe writes of *Kim*, are readily available elsewhere, and he wanted room for the stories. Still, I regret that there isn't more from Kipling's middle years, in particular from *The Light That Failed*, with its remarkable reference to the rooted English hatred of painting by living artists.

On the whole, Howe's long introduction is a model appreciation. He allies Kipling in his best work with Freud in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, and notes that because both took "so uncompromising a view of the cost of repression that we pay for every advantage of civilization, both men appreciated . . . those yearnings we all have to cast away the commands of authority and somehow return to the freedom and comeliness of childhood." Howe amplifies the wonder and praise of a number of Kipling's contemporaries, including Oscar Wilde; he recounts the late story "Mary Postgate" with due regard for its momentous complications; he points forward to Bertolt Brecht and backward to Robert Burns.

But Howe finally locates Kipling in a somewhat uncomfortable way. He writes toward the end of his introduction:

> I have been making high claims for Kipling. . . . But an honest appraisal must also speak of limits, and that means ending with a recognition that in the main Kipling cannot be placed among the very greatest writers of the modern era. He is not in the company of Chekhov and Melville, Joyce and Proust, Eliot and Lawrence.
>
> This is not for lack of skill. . . . Yet some element is too often missing. One does not feel regularly in reading Kipling the presence of an enlarging, liberating sensibility. One does not encounter a world view embracing at once the glories and shame of humanity. . . . Nor does one meet a mind which, agree with its conclusions or not, changes deeply and forever our way of looking at the world.

This sounds more apologetic than fair and honest to me. "Nor does one meet," etc., is especially untrue.

However, such criticasting is very rare with Howe, and it is best in this instance to recall his putative tears. Each tear, though doubtless a tribute to when Howe first heard or read Kipling, is also a sign of a power that Kipling possessed and, unlike most modern writers, did not refuse. Each tear strongly suggests that were Howe asked, beyond argument, beyond fairness, to name one modern writer to last, with Shakespeare and Dickens, as long as English itself, it would not be Lawrence or Joyce. □

Ben Sonnenberg is the editor of Grand Street, *a literary quarterly.*

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FILMS.

ROBERT HATCH

Poltergeist
E. T.
Blade Runner

In this boom time for space fantasies and ghost stories, Steven Spielberg has scooped his colleagues by coming into town with an example of each. He has thus won himself two full-dress salutes in the Sunday *New York Times* and has preempted movie houses all over the city. *Poltergeist* and *E. T.*, Spielberg tells us, spring, respectively, from the dark and sunny chambers of his childhood imaginings. They spring also from innumerable fictions, print and film, of the remote and recent past. Spielberg's is not a conspicuously inventive mind; it is, however, creatively acquisitive, and I believe that his popular appeal rests considerably on his effective reworking of familiar material. Like riders on a roller coaster, the viewers know what to expect; they whoop and clutch one another in happy expectation.

Poltergeist warns us that if we trifle with the last resting places of the dear departed, they will express their resentment in a variety of horrid ways. This suggestion, reasonable enough if you hold with the posthumous persistence of identity, is as old as Edgar Allan Poe. In this case the ghosts emerge through the screen of the Freeling family's TV set, which is tuned to an unoccupied channel, the station having signed off for the night. (This is one of those households where the set is never turned off.) Once out of limbo, and their complaints still unattended, the wraiths progress from table-stirring and chair-stacking to creating gales, abducting a small girl, manifesting themselves in guises that recall the Jabberwock and other goggle-eyed, slavering anomalies. Their discontent reaches a climax during a torrential storm, when the earth heaves and the graves give up their dead. The noise, on screen and in the audience, was deafening.

What pleased me in *Poltergeist* was the vain attempt of Dr. Lesh (Beatrice Straight), a thoroughly scientific investigator of paraphysical phenomena, to cope with the rampaging spirits. They scare the wits out of her, and she has eventual recourse to a diminutive medium with a high and commanding

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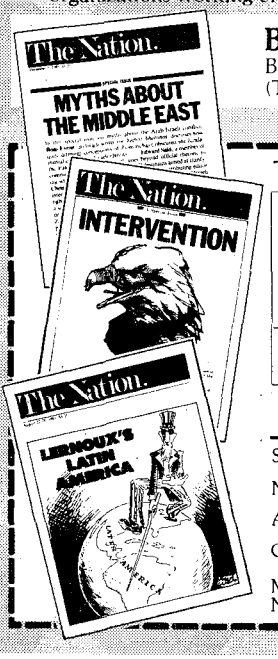

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voice (Zelda Rubinstein), who is not at all cowed by the boisterous aggressions of the restless dead. When it comes to exorcism, incantation outscores electronic scanning.

What bored me about the picture was the beleaguered Freeling family. Like other merchants of spookery, Spielberg likes to display his improbabilities in the most banal of settings, but he tends (as in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*) to carry this sound policy too far. The Freelings are folk you meet every time you turn on the television; they will be shouting with delight over their breakfast cereal, boasting of the whiteness of their wash and the sterility of their bathrooms, and rushing to embrace Dad when he drives up in the new station wagon. Spielberg's intent may be satirical, but I find these stereotypes even more depressing than hobgoblins, and would not have minded if they'd all been dragged off into the fourth dimension.

Spielberg wrote *Poltergeist* and produced it with Frank Marshall. It was directed by Tobe Hooper, known to movie buffs for *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, but it is being billed, perhaps unfairly, as a Spielberg picture. The fact is, it feels like one.

E. T.,[5] which Melissa Mathison wrote from notes by Spielberg, is the classic children's story of a boy and his pet. Frequently in such tales the stalwart lad, sandwiched between a sassy younger sister and a scoffing older brother, has become somewhat subdued and lonely. Then along comes a puppy with a sore paw or a colt that no one wants, and life looks up. For Elliott, however, the newcomer is a two-foot high, leathery and turtle-faced chap with gentle manners, a telescopic neck and an ability, that he exercises with modest discretion, to subvert the laws of physics.

A UFO has landed in a patch of California forest. Its crew members hop out and scurry about excitedly in the dark woods, their bellies lighting up like the thoraxes of fireflies to show the way. Suddenly, men appear with flashlights. The extraterrestrials streak back to their ship and take off in such a rush that one of them is left behind. Next evening Elliott comes upon E. T. in the toolshed, and the tale of mutual trust and mutual affection begins.

The problem, a kind of comic suspense tale, is how to care for E. T. without allowing any adults (and particularly some government security people who suspect his presence) to set eyes on him. Elliott enlists his sister (Drew Barrymore) and his brother (Robert Macnaughton) in the project and for a time they succeed, thanks to luck and a quickness of wit that will delight other children. But the alien, though fond of his young friends (his own age is incalculable), is mortally homesick, and earth's dirty air is doing him no good. He falls sick and the experts track him down. A bewildering profusion of equipment is rolled up to the house; doctors and nurses poke and pry and cover E. T. with tubing, and under their intensive care he draws his last breath—or seems to. The story creaks a bit here, but I gather that a message from space revives the moribund patient. Aided now by a phalanx of boys, he escapes from the impromptu emergency ward and makes it back to the forest and the returning UFO. It is a wild chase, with prowl cars pursuing a platoon of bikes. At E. T.'s urging, his rescuers' bicycles take to the air in a glorious flight that exceeds the happiest dreams of earlier generations raised on *Peter Pan*. The final scene is blatantly sentimental, but then the whole film is a triumph of sentimentality—a joyous fantasy in which the children's determination to befriend a stranger outwits their elders' desire to know what makes him tick.

Spielberg works well with children, but never before has he directed them with such reticence or such appreciation of their humor, intelligence and decency. However, the hero of this film is Carlo Rambaldi, who created E. T. It is almost impossible to keep in mind that the small creature is a mechanism. He expresses puzzlement, anxiety, mischief, humor, affection and loneliness with eloquent ease. In form he is very strange and continually surprising. His mind is quick and engaging and his big eyes look human. I cannot imagine how he was constructed, or what prodigies of camera trickery accomplish his performance, and I hope no one undertakes to enlighten me. I've long since given

WRECKING CREW

120 on the roof, or what's
left of it,
my father hovers above me
cracking loose the charred rafters.
The ashes float down,
filtered with every breath.
I was going to lay it out
this morning, tell him
I'd had enough of shoveling insulation
and chips of glass
scattered over the floor,
of coughing up blackness,
of being able
only to eat and drop, as numb
as a button lost for years.

Now it's almost two.
Each room is poured in heat
and I haven't said a word.
I've been waiting for the right moment
to lay down my father's version
of the future, a future
I can taste already,
salty and ashen,
especially while the sun
burns through the stacked clouds
and the blue planes climb
in a slick maneuver, flaring
like a blossom, five sleek jets
banking toward the green hills.

Arthur Smith

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p my belief in poltergeists, but for a /hile I'd like to believe in E.T.

Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* came in n the heels of Spielberg's double-eader, but it may do well enough, for it ; pitched to a different audience. It is n exercise in shock, a demonstration of nremitting violence, with a sprinkling f sex, set early in the next century.

The year is 2019; the place is Los ngeles, a dripping cancer of a city that as spread and decayed beyond recogni-on. The immediate problem is that six haracters who are wandering about in ie streets are not human beings and ave no right to be on earth. These reatures, male and female, are repli-ants, products of the Tyrell Corpora-on, which turns them out in quantity nd endows them with characteris-cs—principally, enormous strength, bnormal agility and short tempers—iat fit them for work on other planets. 'hey are not robots but living organ-;ms created by genetic engineering and irtually indistinguishable from the real rticle. They are endowed with spurious iemories, which lead them to think of hemselves as human, and have a life xpectancy of four years, which prev-nts them from organizing effectively. t also makes them mad as hornets, and he posse we meet has dropped down on .os Angeles to have a word with their naker, Dr. Tyrell. A blade runner (in his case Harrison Ford) is a detective ssigned to track down and "retire" eplicants who show up on the home)lanet.

The screenplay was adapted from a iovel by Philip K. Dick; I can't com-nent on the book, but even by science iction standards the movie is nonsense. However, that's of little importance, since the only purpose of the plot is to afford Deckard, the detective, with oc-casions for getting the hell beaten out of him and to reward him in the end with a beautiful (and long-lived) replicant. Com-pared with what happens to him in this picture, Ford's bad times in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (Spielberg again) were a p nic. □

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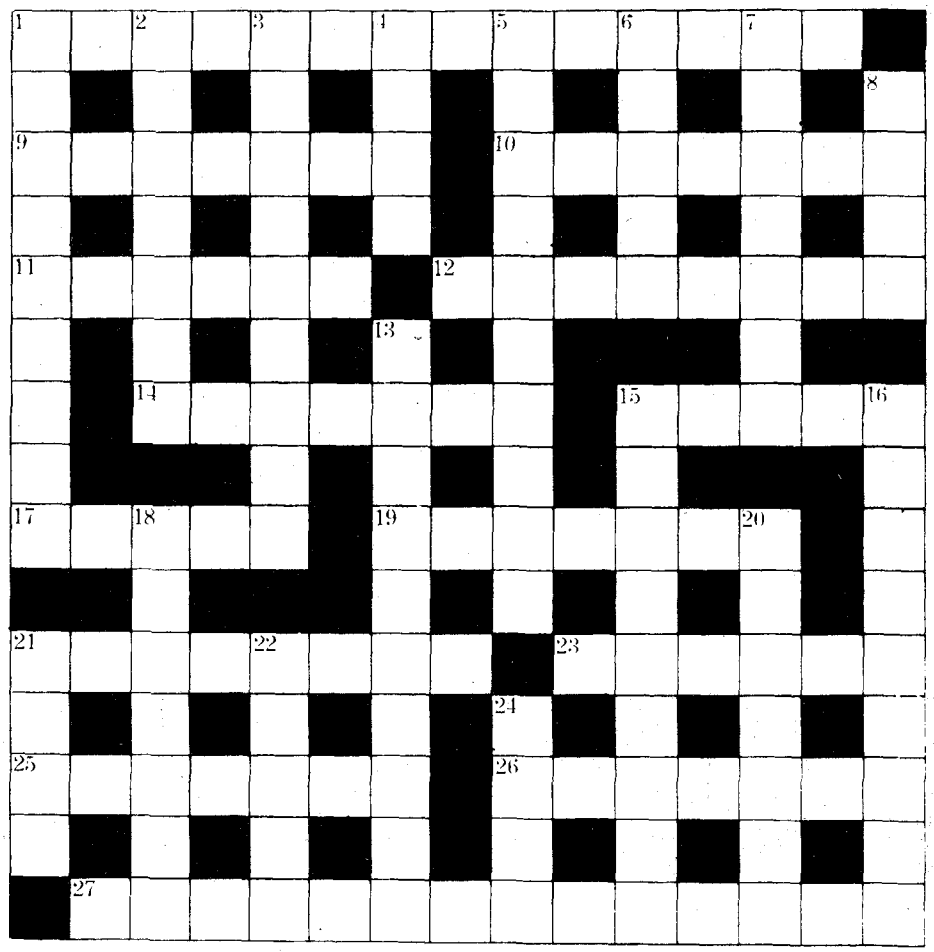

ACROSS

1 The sort of rattler one doesn't like to find in the closet. (6,8)
9 Difficult as a target, which implies the winner has to have pull, power, or a lot of wind. (7)
10 Flower in South America or in O'Connell's country to start with. (7)
11 Tomorrow's was resigned to the winds, according to *Rubaiyat*. (6)
12 A presumably mighty man takes the stage, evidently, being responsible for a great American institution. (8)
14 A form of abettor might make such a stand, or make something fancy about a dull one. (7)
15 Happy about being such a wanderer? On the contrary, rather angry! (5)
17 He certainly doesn't suggest an elder of the Mormon church! (5)
19 Puts away quiet little men. (7)
21 If so, how could one make the debit end! (8)
23 A follower of Carter, possibly? (6)
25 Might it contain a Rolls Royce or a Mercedes for the monarchist? (7)
26 Probably put out by the turn of the tide with one on a bulldog, for example. (7)
27 Agreement in writing? (14)

DOWN

1 Eve or Nancy? (5,4)
2 Wise men, not together in a line that didn't seem to serve much purpose. (7)
3 and 8 A small tuba suggested as the locale of a famous band's stand. (6,3,4)
4 "Hands up!" in the vulgate of trade. (4)
5 Atrocities, or found in hatreds. (10)
6 Possibly cited as coming from authority. (5)
7 Does one act true to life? Quite the contrary! (7)
8 See 3 down
13 Printed description of a pleasing view we follow objectively. (10)
15 Don't bother! It's a much-quoted answer to "What's the matter?" (5,4)
16 The submission of an animal caught around the fence, to begin with. (9)
18 With experience, you'll seldom find the red light here. (7)
20 Those with the good sort draw well, but the count is phoney! (7)
21 It measures the remains of *Fringilla coelebs*, no kidding! (4)
22 One of the things a Fairy went through in MND? It's a pipe! (5)
24 A soldier of Nero who was associated with 3-8. (4)

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